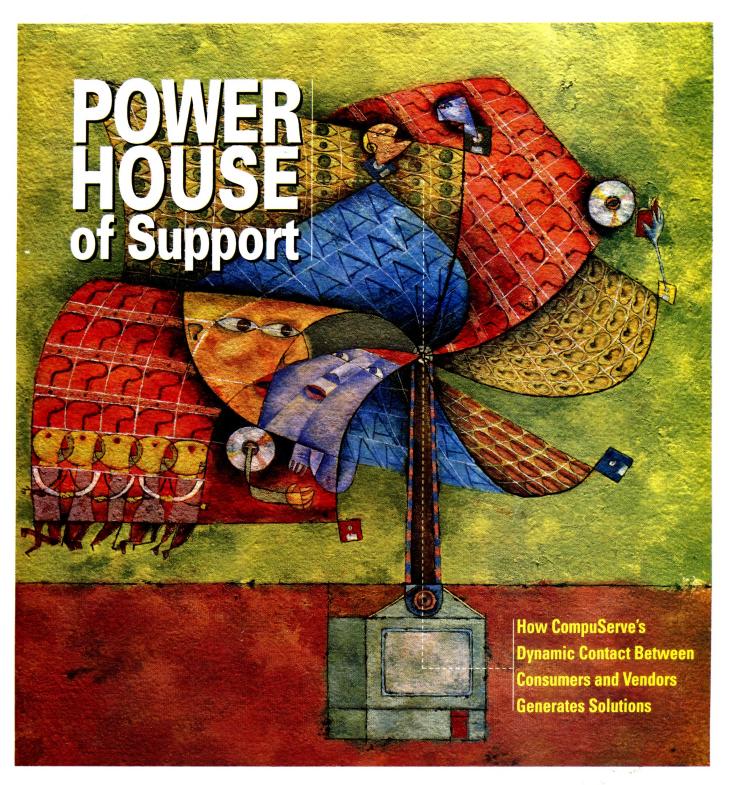
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COMPUSERVE

MAGAZINE



It's 11:30 P.M.

Somebody is still working on the Balanced Budget Amendment.

"My homework is due first thing tomorrow," Andrew said looking up from a pile of books. He sounded panicky as he showed me an assignment sheet titled, "The Pro's and Con's of the Balanced Budget Amendment — Discuss."

"How far have you got?" I asked, already knowing the answer.

"Not very far," he admitted.

"Let's try Magazine Database Plus

on Information Access," I said.

We sat at the computer and power searched:

"Balanced Budget Amendment." And sure enough, there were 84 related articles, the most

recent ones listed first.

"Awesome," Andrew said, sounding relieved. He'd

spotted an article in Forbes — "Balanced

Budget Baloney." Then there was *U.S. News And World Report* with, "Heading For a Big Fall." *Time Magazine*, *The New Republic, Nation's Business, National Review*— each of them had something to say about the Balanced Budget Amendment. "This is great," Andrew said, "it's all right here."

As we downloaded six promising articles I noticed he was getting anxious again. "What is it now?" I asked.

"I have to come up with a conclusion," he replied glumly.

"Even Information Access can't do that for you."

"Please belp, Dad," he said. I tried to smile.

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30 Investing in the Future

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► Catch computer-industry news as it happens and read today's news, commentary, and product reviews. You'll find it only in Online Today, a daily updated newspaper.

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CompuServe Magazine (ISSN 0891-4672) is published monthly in the United States of America by CompuServe Incorporated, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., Columbus, OH 43220. Canadian GST Registration No. R127010582.

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CompuServe® Magazine™, May 1995

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Dear Reader

Then traveling on holiday or business, I never know how residents of a city will respond to my tourist pleas for help. In Paris when I asked for directions to the Bibliotheque Nationale, a store clerk hustled me outside, pointed "that way," and then left me in the street, still confused. In Munich when I asked for directions to my hotel, a store clerk pulled out a map, showed me the street I needed to take, and then gave me the map. Different cities. Different responses.

Visiting the computing support areas on CompuServe yields similarly diverse experiences. Stop by a technical forum where beta testers and programmers hang out, and you'll probably get a concise, three-sentence answer. Stop by a forum dedicated to helping users fire up a new product, and you may find long, chatty, but informative diatribes. Different forums. Different responses.

"The Vendor Connection," beginning on page 12, will help new and veteran CompuServe members understand why the forum cultures vary. Moreover, it will give you an idea of what to expect when you drop by for a visit. It explains why reading a forum's News Flash is important, why posted messages sometimes get quick and other times not-so-quick replies, and why certain library files and forum discussions appear in the most unlikely places. In addition, the story directs you to technical-help databases provided by Apple, Lotus, Microsoft, and more on page 18. It also brings to your attention the treelike computing vendor menus that provide guidance not only to a company's support forum but also to related areas of interest, such as technical-information libraries, new product offerings, and conference schedules, on pages 19 and 20.

If there's one consistent theme across computing support forums, it's a willingness to help. An OS/2 Support Forum member in our story offered to drive anywhere within 100 miles of his home to help fellow members struggling with OS/2 Warp installation problems. Which is to say, when you log on looking for computing support, you won't be left in the street confused. Between sysops and fellow CompuServe members, you'll be taken care of.

Do you or your company want to provide computing support online? To be considered as a prospective online support provider in a computing vendor forum, GO PARTNER. The area is free of standard connect-time charges, so business owners can take their time reading through the five menu options, including CompuServe Background, Benefits of Electronic Support, Forum/Vendor Section Definition, Your Commitment, and Vendor Proposal Application.

When you access the application you'll receive a notice listing the information needed to fill it out. Besides company name and address, this includes software platform, number of total registered users, countries of distribution, and more for the product you want to support online. Once you fill out the application you'll be contacted about the decision. Please note that many proposals are received weekly and responded to in the order in which they're received.

CompuServe and Fujitsu Limited are in the process of adding an animated online community to the Information Service. Called WorldsAway, it's a place where members create and control their animated alter egos, known as avatars, and come together via chat services and the graphic dimension of interactive multimedia. The product is still a few months shy of final release; however, you can GO AWAY and get a peek at what's to come using an enhanced WorldsAway menu. Icons on the menu include Welcome to WorldsAway, Be a Founding Member, Community Forum, About WorldsAway, What's New, and more. To view some of the WorldsAway environments, access Library 2, "What's Hot," in the Community Forum, an extended service, for GIF images.

Be sure to sign up to be a founding member by clicking on the menu icon. You'll then be kept up-to-date on all aspects of the project.

Kassie Rose

Editor

Alternative Office

Thank you for the article "Working Your Way in the Alternative Office" (February, p. 10). As a budding home-office entrepreneur from a small village in Canada, I find I must overcome the problem of isolation.

In the short time I have been a member of CompuServe, I've realized that being located in a town of 5,000 doesn't make doing business as impossible as it once seemed. Your references and forum files are appreciated and will be well used.

Rod Wilson Elora, Ontario 75364,2425

I would like to comment on your article on teleworking. Last December I launched a small software company with a friend, using his home as an office. I live a half-hour from there, and I work a lot at home.

In the article, Charles Rodgers commented that working at home requires a high degree of organization and the ability to resist the temptations of the refrigerator, TV, and beautiful days. It seems to me that the CompuServer seeks a new kind of life, in which enjoying a beautiful day is a normal part and not a sin anymore.

A century ago, machines allowed the worker to make money so he could buy things, but kept him a "prisoner" of the office and of his job. Now a machine, the computer, equipped with, say, WinCIM, allows the worker to make enough money to go out and enjoy the sunshine! This is the old beatnik dream come true.

Guillaume Bur Versailles, France 100343,2043

Tax Filing

Bill Smith's article "Taxing Procedures" (February, p. 26) was extremely useful in outlining tax services available for PCs through CompuServe. Particularly useful was the accessibility of more than 400 tax forms through GO TAXFORMS. Before reading Mr. Smith's article, I failed in several attempts to get through to the IRS to order forms. In a matter of minutes, I downloaded the Adobe Acrobat viewer and the forms I needed. Presto! They appeared on my laser printer, including directions, looking better than an IRS original. The Accounting Vendor Forum (GO ACCOUNTING) was also very useful in getting some tax questions answered. Next year maybe we'll try electronic filing.

Mark A. Kaloustian Livonia, Michigan 74447,1375 Tracy Mygrant's example used for searching for tax forms ("Downloading IRS Documents," February, p. 27) gives the impression that to claim a charitable contribution you must use a Form 8283. This is not exactly correct. A Form 8283 is used for noncash contributions over \$500. If your contribution is noncash and under \$500, you can claim the deduction on Schedule A of your 1040. This also applies to cash contributions.

William Snarski Wheeling, Illinois 71672,3673

Electronic Books

Following February's Letters (p. 4) about electronic books, I would like to comment on electronic newspapers. Projects are under way to eliminate paper from newspapers. A subscription would include a device to electronically read the news. What is particularly interesting is the options that are involved with such a device. The news would be sent directly to the subscriber based on the subscriber's news criteria. If you don't like sports but enjoy financial news, the electronic download can fit those needs. Imagine weeks of news on a hand-held unit, and the news being sent as it is received instead of waiting for the next day.

I can't see myself reading an electronic book, but I would read an electronic "newspaper." I am looking forward to selecting stories the same way I do using CompuServe's Executive News Service (GO ENS) folders.

Larry Kedigh Wichita, Kansas 76326,2401

New Pricing

I would like to comment on the Dear Reader (February, p. 3) that mentioned the new Standard Pricing Plan and how it affects users who have to call long distance. The reduction in the WATS surcharge is long overdue and very much appreciated, but I believe the WATS surcharge should be reduced further. In the editorial you state, "Keep in mind that as long as you are in basic services, the connect-time clock does not run." Even though the connect-time clock is not running, the WATS-surcharge clock is. CompuServe can continue to include additional basic services, but rural users calling long distance are charged 10 cents a minute to call the WATS number and must pay for a long-distance call. I encourage CompuServe to further reduce the WATS surcharge or, better, eliminate it altogether.

Thomas Ochs Jamestown, Pennsylvania 70421,3411

Monitor

I'd like to comment on the interesting article "Getting the Words Out, Live" (Monitor, January, p. 7), about attending a speech, realtime, via computer. This same technology has been in use for several years to provide closed-captioning services on television for live events. Sure, there are some spectacular errors when the captioner is not given the right information before an event or speech, but the skills are awesome considering the speed and accuracy demonstrated.

All new televisions have the required chips needed to decode the captions and display them; I urge people to check out this very important avenue for getting information to the U.S. deaf community. (European television standards, PAL and SECAM, have no provision for captioning, and there seems to be none planned for the near future.)

Jim Pogue Houston, Texas 75364,1164

Low-Stress Research

I am a new CompuServe user and want to let you know how helpful your service has been to me. I can give you one brief example from the past week.

I am a minister. While putting together a workshop on the subject of stress and burnout, I took a break from my studies and read your magazine, stumbling across an advertisement for Magazine Database Plus. I quickly got back to my computer and ran a search on the subjects of stress and burnout. I was able to download several very helpful files. What I learned helped me put together a great presentation with a lot of practical tips for the people who attended the workshop.

It would have taken forever to research my subject any other way. Thank you for your invaluable service to us all, making our jobs a lot easier and more productive.

Bill Shepson Sacramento, California 75604,2005

Correction

In "New Computing Vendors" (March, p. 32), the product Spee-Dee was incorrectly attributed to PCs Compleat. PCs Compleat should have been listed as an authorized reseller of PC hardware and software. PCs Compleat won a 1994 five-star award for service and technical support for notebook computers from PC Computing magazine.

Send your letter to the editor via CompuServe Mail addressed to CIS:EDIT. Please include your name, address, and User ID number. CompuServe Magazine reserves the right to edit and publish any letter it receives unless it is marked Not for Publication. Members whose letters are published will receive a \$25 connect-time credit.



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TECHNOLOGY UPDATE



ou don't have to have a teenager to appreciate having extra phone jacks. Almost everyone wishes they had more phone jacks around the house.

When I decided to put an office in my home, I called the phone company to find out how much it would cost to add extra phone jacks. Would you believe it was \$158?

No more excuses.

Today, there are a thousand reasons to get an extra phone jack and a thousand excuses not to get one. Now an engineering breakthrough allows you to add a jack anywhere you have an electrical outlet. Without the hassle. Without the expense. And without the miles of wires.

Like plugging in an appliance. Now you can add extensions with a remarkable new device called the Wireless Phone Jack. It allows you to convert your phone signal into an FM signal and then broadcast it over your home's existing electrical wiring.

Just plug the transmitter into a phone iack and an electrical outlet. You can then insert a receiver into any outlet anywhere in your house. You'll be

able to move your phone to rooms or areas that have never had jacks before.

Clear reception at any distance. The Wireless Phone Jack uses your home's existing electrical wiring to transmit signals. This gives you sound quality that far exceeds cordless phones. It even exceeds the quality of previous devices. In fact, the Wireless Phone Jack

> has ten times the power of its predecessor.

Your range extends as far as you have electrical outlets: five feet or five hundred feet. If you have an outlet, you can turn it into a phone jack—no matter how far away it is. The Wireless Phone Jack's advanced companding noise reduction features guarantee you crystal-clear reception throughout even the largest home.

Privacy guarantee.

You can use The Wireless Phone Jack in any electrical outlet in or around vour home, even if it's on a different circuit than the transmitter. Each Wireless Phone Jack uses one of 65,000 different security codes. You can be assured that only vour receiver will be able to pick up transmissions from your transmitter.

Unlimited extensions—no monthly **charge.** Most phone lines can only handle up to five extensions with regular phone jacks. Not with the Wireless Phone Jack. All you need is one transmitter, and you can add as many receivers as you want. Six, ten, there's no limit. And with the Wireless Phone Jack, you'll never get a monthly charge for the extra receivers

Works with any phone device.

This breakthrough technology will fulfill all of your single-line phone needs. It has a special digital interface for use with your fax machine or modem. You can even use it with your answering machine just by plugging it into the Wireless Phone Jack receiver.

Special factorydirect offer. To introduce this new technology, we are offering a special factory-direct package. For a limited time, the transmitter is only \$49. One transmitter works an unlimited number of receivers priced at \$49 for the first one and \$39 for each additional receiver. Plus, with



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- Renting. You want to add extensions, but you don't want to pay each time you move.
- Other phone devices. You have an answering machine, modem or fax machine you want to move to a more convenient place.

The Wireless Phone Jack System

consists of a transmitter (right) and a receiver (left). One transmitter will operate an unlimited number of receivers.



M O N I T O R

Swim Forth and Multiply (and Send 'em to a Good School)

ere's a hobby that includes romance and plenty of underwater action. On the other hand, it also involves fish. But that's to be expected, since the pastime we're talking about happens to be fish breeding.

The members who meet in Section 9, "Breeding & Fry Care," of the Aquaria/Fish Forum (GO FISHNET) say their avocation is simply a great way to relax and learn about the natural world.

"Fish breeding can be done by any hobbyist, since the fish do most of the work," comments member Ken Hirst.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about fish breeding, observes section leader Tom Griffin, is that many hobbyists enter the field involuntarily. "Some of the most popular beginners' fish, such as mollies, swordtails, platies, and the legendary guppy, are livebearing fishes with a tendency to provide young in the home tank, whether invited to or not." He notes that despite their sudden entry into the hobby, most new godparents quickly find themselves hooked.

Hirst notes that to begin a career as an amateur fish breeder, all one needs is some information and a relatively modest amount of hardware. "It helps to have a small tank or two for spawning and raising the fry separately from your larger fish, which would surely like to have the little ones for lunch." He adds that the forum's ac-

cess to fast information comes in most handy when "spontaneous breeding" occurs. "The fish often catch us by surprise by laying eggs when and where we least expect it,"

Member Lee Bell says that various types of fish have different breeding habits, which can complicate things for the new hobbyist. "You may wish to pick a certain type or family of tropical fish," he says. Bell points out that enthusiasts can select from saltwater-tropical and cold-water fish, as well as numerous kinds of freshwater fish.

For a jump start on fish breeding, visit the forum's "Breeding & Fry Care" library and view or download the introductory article "Novice Propagation" (BF0233.TXT, 7,083 bytes).

Now Departing From Gate Win95: Sim Pilots' Home Field?

hen the City of Chicago's Aviation Department and Mayor Richard Daley announced plans to close Meigs Field, a tiny airport on the city's lakefront, it didn't take long for Aviation Forum (GO AVSIG) members to fly off the handle.

Forum member Bill Giannetti posted a message alerting members to the potential closing, likely to happen in September 1996, when the airport's lease expires. "For the hundreds of . . . aircraft that regularly use this facility, the loss of the airport would be devastating," he told members. Meigs is a

"general aviation" airport—not used by airlines or the military—and connects passengers on private, corporate, and charter aircraft with downtown Chicago. "The loss of Meigs as a gateway to the Loop, Soldier Field, and McCormick Place would be a crime," he said. Giannetti urged members to contact the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the National Business Aircraft Association, the Illinois Division of Aeronautics, state representatives, and anyone else who might be able to help. Forum members responded with words of support.

A few, however, saw some humor in the situation. "Maybe someone should get Bill Gates involved, too," joked member Alfred Poor. "After all, Microsoft has a fairly large investment in Meigs, since that's where Flight Simulator starts. Heck, maybe [Gates] would even buy it outright."

Member Rick Lindstom's reply: "Why don't we cut to the chase and urge Bill Gates to buy Chicago?" After all, as forum member Pete McWilliams observed, "Chicago" would be a great name for a software release.

WORLD UPDATE

Two More Country-Specific Forums Open Up Online

The Israel Forum (GO ISRAEL) provides current information for people interested in Israel and Jewish topics. Members can find travel recommendations, the latest political developments and business opportunities, and information about Jewish culture. Forum message sections include "Visiting Israel," "Jewish Education," "Food and Celebrations," "Software," "Humor/Music/Art," and "Movin' to Israel." Communicate with the Israeli government in Section 2, "Ask the Embassy," and download the newest Hebrew and Jewish software in Library 11, "Software."

The Italian Forum (GO ITALFOR) is devoted to Italy, its culture, and anything related to the country. The forum is conducted in Italian and English. Message sections include "Turismo" (tourism), "Lingua and

Cultura" (language and culture), "Gastronomia" (food), "Residents in Italy," "Politica/Dibattiti" (politics), "Business/Lavoro" (business and job market), "Hardware and Software," and "Programmazione" (programming).

Members in Switzerland can now access CompuServe at speeds up to 9,600 bps via the CompuServe network in Bern and Geneva. The access number for Bern is 031 382 6060; for Geneva, 022 738 9740 (the city codes of 031 for Bern and 022 for Geneva are not required if dialing from within these cities). The CompuServe network in Western Europe is free of communications surcharges during all times and is the most cost-effective method of accessing the Information Service. With the addition of these new nodes, the CompuServe network is now available in 34 European cities.

The Heir Club for Fans



They're Britain's royal family, but that hasn't stopped most of the rest of the world from following the lives and loves of Charles, Diana, and all the other players in history's most closely watched real-life soap opera. And it's why the People Magazine Forum (GO PEOFRM) recently opened Section 9, "Royals."

Forum member and section regular Lisa Snoddy is a Californian who thinks of herself as a displaced monarchist. "I consider myself perfectly sane, just a bit obsessive," she says. Snoddy notes that like many fellow members she is an expert on

royal trivia—"everything from what Diana wore underneath her wedding dress to the Queen Mother's favorite tipple," she observes.

Snoddy also likes to see royals up close and personal. "I have gone to see any and all members of the royal family who take it upon themselves to visit California," she says. "I have stood in the rain for four hours to catch a glimpse of the Queen." Snoddy also managed to get herself invited to a polo match that featured an appearance by the Duke and Duchess of York. "I even went so far as to go to college in London for a semester with the hope of seeing Princess Diana while I was there." (She did.) Snoddy also talked her new husband into taking her on a "royal honeymoon" to places in Britain frequented by members of the royal family.

"I think what makes the royals so fascinating to me is the value they place on tradition," says Snoddy. "They stand for what is special about Britain, what sets it apart from all other countries. That special 'Britishness' no other country can em-

Kids Fit the Pieces of a Jurassic Puzzle

The first description of me was published in 1825; a king once thought I was some sort of giraffe; and a banquet was once held inside me. Who am I?

If you guessed "iguanodon," you've solved one of the mystery dinosaur riddles members ponder each week in Section 3, "DinoKids," of the Dinosaur Forum (GO DINOFORUM).

Each Monday, 13-year-old Lindsey Duncan (better known there as Lindsey-a-saurus) posts clues to the prehistoric puzzler, and dino-sleuths try to identify the creature she's describing. "I generally mix the dinosaurs up so that one week it's a sauropod, the next a theropod, and then maybe a hadrosaur or ceratopsian. It's the kids' job to hit the books and discover the dinosaur's identity using their own resources," says Duncan. Eight-year-old Jason Webster, a regular participant who solved the "iguanodon" mystery, says he found the answer in *The Illustrated Dinosaur Dictionary*, a book he got from his school's library. "I participated because it sounded like fun. I like to solve mysteries and puzzles," he says.

Adults occasionally join the fun, too. Michael Sternberg, a 43-year-old amateur paleontologist, says he read a clue from another puzzle—"My name means plank-lizard"—and had to take a stab. "I just couldn't pass that by, compelled to offer such guesses as plankosaurus and boardasaurus," he quips. "Sadly, these were all wrong." The correct answer? Pinacosaurus.

Duncan also introduces a weekly "guest dinosaur"; after digging up information about a featured creature, she creates a clever presentation and posts it to the section. Past examples have included a poem about troodon, a play about pachycephalosaurus, an elaphrosaurus fill-in-the-blank game, and even a song about deinonychus set to the tune of "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

For more DinoKids fun, search the

"DinoKids" library for examples of dinosaur emoticons (EMOTIC.TXT) and a computer drawing of stegosaurus by DinoKid Danny Lairamore (STEGIE.GIF).



Ziff NET.

Your Last Stop Before the I-Way

Accessing the Internet is on everybody's cyber-agenda these days. Still, with its myriad tools, protocols, terms, and acronyms, it's easy to get intimidated. What do SLIP and PPP mean? Where are the cool hangouts? How can you find materials in the online Library of Congress?

To help guide you through the brave new world of the 'Net, ZiffNet has amassed Internet-related materials—shareware and freeware, informational text files, tutorials, tips, hot spots, utilities, and more. They're all housed in the Interactive Week Forum's (GO IAWEEK) "The Internet Files" library. (Macintosh users should GO DOWNTECH for Mac-oriented Internet information.)

Looking for a collection of cool Internet roadside attractions? Download INET.TXT. Have you been trying to get your hands on a good news reader for Internet Usenet groups? Check out the Trumpet for Windows News Reader (WTWSK.ZIP). Are you interested in putting the Internet to work as a job-hunting aid? Wait till you see NETJOB.TXT!

For newcomers, "The Ziff-Davis Interactive Guide to the Internet" (UNDER.ZIP in Windows format and UNDRTX.ZIP in ASCII) contains a compilation of the best "intro to the Internet" articles published in the past year by Ziff-Davis magazines such as PC Magazine and PC/Computing. It covers the basic structure of the Internet, an overview of tools and protocols, search and retrieval methods, etiquette guidelines, ways to get connected, and much more.

ZiffNet is part of CompuServe's extended services and carries an additional membership fee. GO ZIFFMEM for details.

Monitor

Contributors: John Edwards, Michele D. Kinnamon, Paula Lovejoy, Tracy Mygrant, Lindsy Van Gelder

Behind the Screens

with John Edwards



Take My Modem...Please

As a humorist who happens to write about computers and the high-tech world, I often get letters (e-mail, of course) from readers who wonder why I think computers are funny.

"My computer has never told a joke in its life," the typical letter goes. "Not even a bad one about two priests, a rabbi, and a pink Mazda Miata. In fact, ever since my computer erased all my financial records for the years 1989 through 1993, it has made my life a living hell. My ex-wife thinks I'm trying to hide my accounts, I'm unable to apply for a home-equity loan, and the IRS is about to haul me into tax court—in which, as you no doubt know, there is no wise and warm Judge Wapner. Computers definitely aren't funny."

And that, of course, is what makes cyberspace so richly, deeply humorous. As Mark Twain once observed, "The secret source of humor itself is not joy but sorrow." You betcha, Sam. Nothing is more sorrowful than the person who has just been royally worked over by his or her PC. (Except, perhaps, the person who has just suffered through a two-hour online press conference with Al Gore.)

The flow of computer-related humor is never-ending. It's an eternal river of travail that winds its way through the cyberlandscape. There's humor in purchasing the computer with the mammothly complex microprocessor that can't perform simple division (and the chip maker who tells you your boss won't care if your monthly budget is off by a million bucks or so). There's humor in finding out that the luscious lady who so captivated you with her seductive e-mail correspondence is actually a 12year-old-boy named Butchie in Sawbrush, Colorado. There's humor in discovering that computer manufacturers measure notebook-battery operating time in Romulan hours, which happen to be 47 percent shorter than their earthly equivalents.

Anyway, let's face it, if you're a hardworking writer whose bread and butter is sarcasm, high tech is heaven. After all, we're talking about a community (in a virtual sense, of course) that's largely populated by peo-

ple who are hopelessly, helplessly out of control-and kind of like it that way. Take the muchheralded Internet, for example. The Internet is a network of computers operated by businesses, universities, and kids who pump gas at the full-service island. As a result, Haiti, when compared with the Internet, looks like a place of order and decorum. True, the United States government has never seen fit to send the Marines into the Internet, but if another hacker takes a swipe at a Defense Department computer I wouldn't be at all surprised to see Clint Eastwood lead the charge.

So why are computers funny? Because they intrigue us as they hurt us. And because you can kick them and they don't kick back.

For more BTS gems by John Edwards, GO OLT-130. Edwards is a contributing editor of CompuServe Magazine. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007.412.

Senior Singles Get Together

ove knows no age barrier, a fact that's proven every Monday evening when the Retirement Living Forum (GO RETIREMENT) holds its weekly Senior Singles conference.

The conference began late last year when members Edwin Reed and Lana Bender-

Olds proposed the concept as a way of helping lonely singles over the age of 50 ease back into the dating scene. Reed points out that older singles have different needs than their younger counterparts. "I think that singles of our age just want somebody compatible to discuss

things with," he says. "Many times they have just been widowed or divorced, so they're a little tense about new relationships. An online conference lets them have an arm's-length relationship." While no permanent in-person relationships have yet developed from the conference, Reed feels that it's

only a matter of time.

The Senior Singles conference participants range between the ages of 50 and 70, but Reed observes, "We don't ask ages." The conference also tends to attract more women than men. "Our conference is a little unusual in that respect," says Reed. But regardless of

the male-to-female ratio on a given night, most conference participants come away feeling better about their situation and themselves. "They learn that they're not alone, that oth-

ers share their concerns, and

that being single isn't the end of the world," he says. "It's really all about having another chapter opening in their lives."

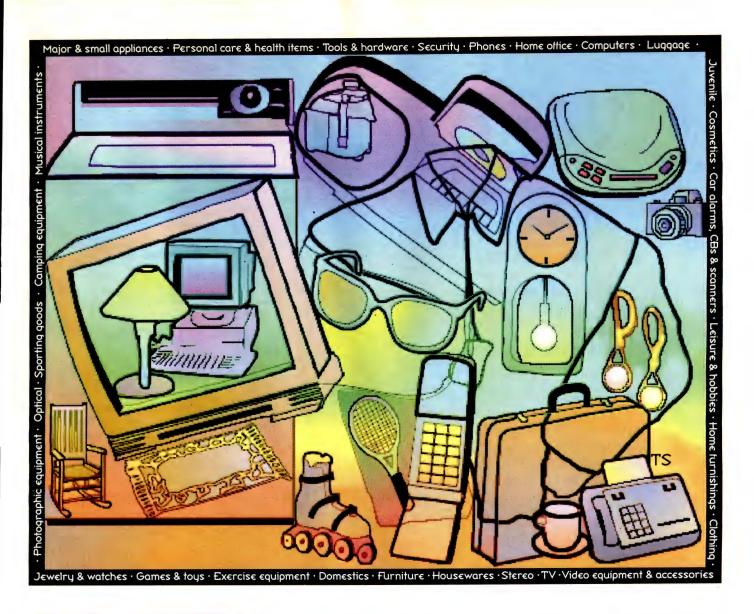
To join the Senior Singles conference, visit the Retirement Living Forum's Conference Room 2 on Mondays at 10 P.M. ET.



Want Fries With That, Monsieur?

True or false: All Quarter Pounders are the same, even in countries that use the metric system. Well, oui et non. According to the reports of travelers in a recent thread on the French board of the European Forum (GO EURFORUM), the ambience at the thousands of Golden Arches all over the world varies widely. For instance, the McDonald's in Mecca serves meat prepared according to Muslim dietary laws; in Riyadh and Jidda, men and women are seated separately and the restaurant closes four times a day for prayers. In Oslo, one can eat a "Mac Lox," made of salmon. In France itself (where the chains are nicknamed "MacDo"), Père Noel comes to hand out free Big Macs to the kids at Christmastime. (The adults can meanwhile order a glass of wine.) But the basic formula for the classic McMeal—fries, lettuce, pickles, ketchup, etc.—is surprisingly consistent, from Rio to Quebec. (Indeed, one French forumite insisted that it was the only food from "home" he could enjoy on a trip across the channel to England.)

As some French philosopher probably once pointed out, the more things change, the more the Special Sauce remains.



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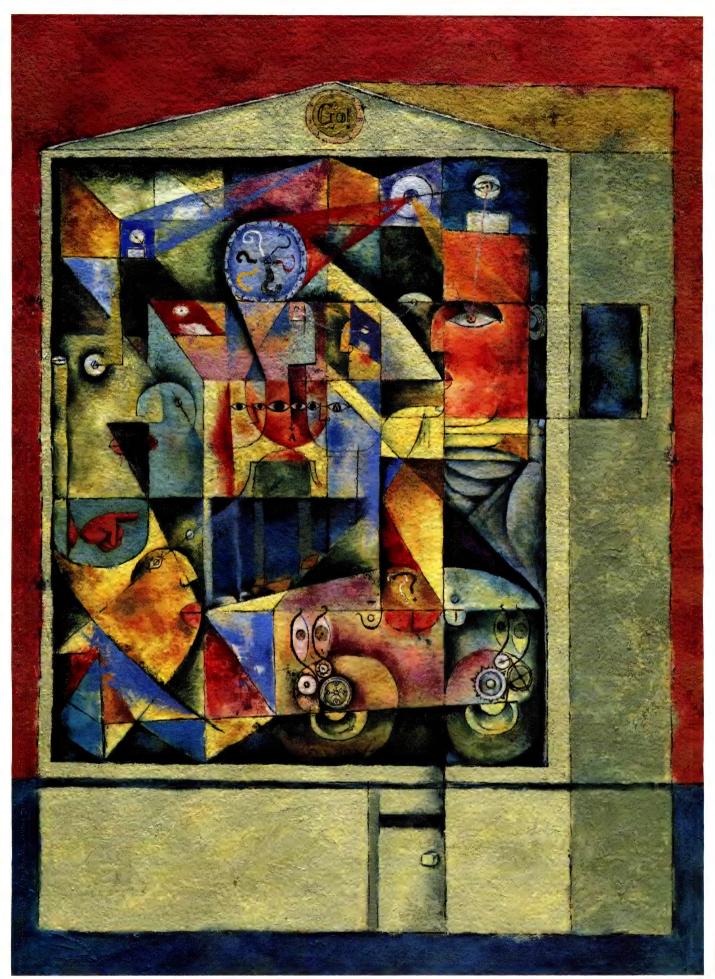
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The Vendor Connection

Online support is the name of the game for computer suppliers large and small. Vendors and users tap one another's expertise for the ultimate interactive service.

An interesting paradox in the world of modern personal computing: As lower prices and point-and-click simplicity entice more and more people to bring home powerful multimedia PCs, the hardware and software that make them so alluring are increasingly complex. While it's never been easier to get one up and running, customizing a machine to personal needs can be tricky. The modest 40MB hard drives and simple word processors of a few years ago have given way to gigabyte internal storage capacities, multi-disk Swiss-Army software suites, and octopus-like peripheral expansion. To many new users, personal computing is simultaneously user-friendly and user-baffling.

Fortunately, hardware and software manufacturers mitigate the complexities of their products by offering help online. Most new computers now come with modems bundled or built in, and it's easier for companies to assist new users online than it is to maintain flooded telephone help lines. Online support forums let users post questions, read threads, and download help files and updates at any time, and give experienced users and enthusiasts the opportunity to lend a hand. "Support has become so demanding that the usual ways to contact [hardware and software companies]via phone or fax-have become rather obsolete," says Jose Ortiz, a sysop of the Multimedia Forum and its sister A, B, and C Vendor forums.

With more than 850 "vendors" represented, CompuServe offers by far the richest source of online computer support in the world. Members are a simple Go command away from companies as massive as Microsoft or as niched as morphing specialist North

Coast Software. Whether focused on desktop publishing, palmtop computing, or any number of platform-specific issues, these areas offer technical support for everything from the earliest Commodore 8-bit computers to the latest PowerPC hybrids. The key to getting the most out of online support is knowing how computer support forums work, what to expect once you join one, and the best way to interact when you're there.

CompuServe's online support comes in two flavors: forums and sections run by computer companies, such as the Borland, Intel, and Lotus forums, and those operated by one or more independent sysops unaffiliated with manufacturers, such as the PCNet, Micronetworked Apple Users Group (MAUG), Graphics, and Pen Technology forums. Each offers a slightly different angle of support, yet their content frequently overlaps. Generally, vendor-sponsored areas provide access to bug reports, fixes, and other files often not circulated outside the company, while independent forums offer real-world advice from impartial expert users.

"Company-run forums are the place to go to get answers to specific technical questions or information about specific products," says Andy Torgan, wizop of all PC Multimedia forums. "You will find the same kind of information in user-run forums, but also advice that isn't the company line—frank comparisons of two competing products, debate, you name it." Both types offer surprisingly blunt opinions, and not just in message threads; some members find answers in conference rooms or group discussions, where they can be counseled step-by-step in real time.

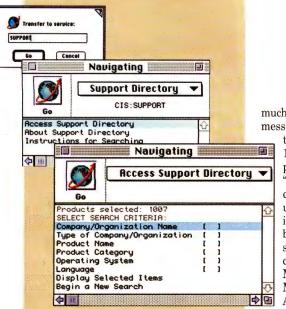
The advice found in computer support forums isn't provided by sysops and corporate support reps alone; indeed, the collective expertise of the forum membership handles

FEATURE

Where to GO

GO SUPPORT to access an index of computerrelated product and support areas. For more information, see page 14.

Gregor Gilliom is senior editor of CompuServe Magazine. His CompuServe User ID number is 70004,4260.



Where to Find the Support You Need

With more than 1,000 hardware- and software-related areas on CompuServe, do you know where to find help when you need it? Turn to the Support Directory (GO SUPPORT), an index of all CompuServe computer-related product and support areas.

To find the areas that support the product (or type of product) in question, GO SUPPORT and enter a product name or category, a company name or category, an operating system, or local language. The directory then searches through a database of hardware- and software-related services and generates a list of forums where you're likely to find help. The Support Directory is a basic service, so it is free of connect-time charges if you're on the Standard Pricing Plan.

When the directory conducts its search, it looks for "hits" from among CompuServe's vendor-sponsored, user-to-user, and other computer-related areas. Don't be surprised, for example, if it leads you to forums run by industry magazines or organizations. Computer Shopper, Dr. Dobb's Journal, MacUser, PC World, and other publications may be uncovered by a directory search. Their online areas offer access to past articles and direct contact with the editors and other readers.

Computer-industry organizations that assist members online include the Help Desk Institute, which supports help-desk professionals; the U.S.-based National Computer Security Association, which provides expert advice on computer- and information-security issues; and the Software Publishers Association, which answers questions about software-publishing topics.

—Tracy Mygrant

much of the demanding message traffic (some-

> times as heavy as 1,000 or more postings a week). "People become excited about a product, they enjoy using it, and they become expert, says Neil Shapiro, chief sysop of the MAUG forums, 16 Macintoshand Apple II-oriented user-supported fo-

rums. "They like to establish a relationship with the vendors to exchange views, and hey, while they're there, they might as well help someone else. That's

what online life is all about—participating in

a two-way community."

"The public discussion is important," says Matt Drury, forums manager of the Go Graphics collection of user- and company-supported forums. "It allows customers to help other customers in a way that could otherwise happen only randomly. Rarely do I see such assistance take place in a local software store."

When a member's need is met by forum resources, the result can be problem solving with unparalleled efficiency. Composing written messages rather than extemporaneously providing verbal explanations over the telephone results in a more accurate level of communication. In addition, the response can be printed or saved for future reference. "In the case of helping solve PC configuration problems, these written responses can be passed directly into files, thus avoiding the misunderstandings prevalent when trying to solve these types of problems over the phone," says

Jim Rohrer, sysop of the Toshiba Forum and online support supervisor for Toshiba America Information Systems.

And when a vendor answers one question in a public forum, it "may well have headed off a hundred phone calls from people with the same question who simply lurked in the forum and had their question answered," says Thom Hartmann, wizop of the Desktop Publishing forums.

Companies that sponsor forums get their share out of the relationship in many ways. If the forum is well run and responsive, suppliers can tap consumer sentiment for new and improved products. Some companies value user input so highly they've built into their forums special sections for nothing more than suggestions. In The World of Lotus, an umbrella point of entry to several forums devoted to Lotus business software, members can sub-

User-run support was active well before corporations began offering online advice—the backand-forth commentary of early bulletin boards set the paradigm vendors follow today. Now, most aspects of computing are served by both.

mit ideas to an automated Lotus Idea Line that duly records the name and address of the contributing user. Online feedback was instrumental in IBM's decision to distribute OS/2 Warp on disks that could be installed from either the A or B drive-IBM decided to ship OS/2 Warp only on 3.5-inch disks, and members told the company it would need to accommodate

those who still use machines with 5.25-inch A drives. "I use forum-member messages to send, internally, both positive and negative comments on the product," says Irv Spalten, sysop of the IBM-sponsored OS/2 Support Forum.

"We always look to online support first and, indeed, get most of *our* questions answered by reading existing forum messages," says Robert Braver, president of Micro Firmware, which occupies Section 8 in the PC Vendor D Forum. The Norman, Oklahoma–based supplier of Phoenix BIOS upgrade products has been online for about nine months and recently enhanced its product with automatic setup functions "as a direct result of customer feedback," says Braver. "What's good for our customers is also good for us. When we reduce our support costs by improving our product or documentation, we also reduce our customers' costs."

Online presence can also promote a company, says Matthew Arbeid, an online support rep for ATI Technologies, a maker of high-speed graphics accelerators and multimedia input devices represented in Section 17 of the

Graphics Vendor A Forum. "If a customer sees the vendor provide effective responses in a timely manner, he is more

likely to tell his friends and co-workers about the outstanding service," he says. ATI tries to answer all posted messages within one day, and in a recent three-month stretch its section totaled more than 17,000 messages.

How It Works

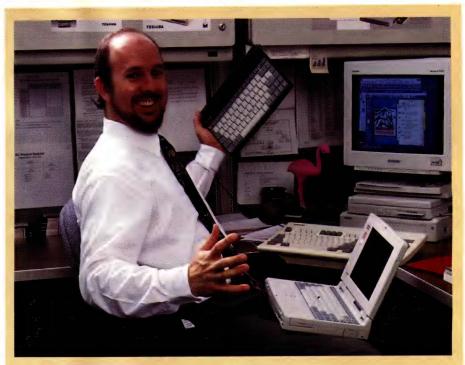
A company may support all its products in a single forum (such as the Logitech Forum) or split them among several (Symantec sponsors 10 related forums, and Microsoft manages more than 40). Many companies, on the other hand, maintain only a section or two within a single forum shared by other companies united by a platform (such as the PC and Mac vendor forums) or a cross-platform field of computing (such as the music-oriented com-

panies in the MIDI vendor forums). Generally, the larger the company, the broader its online presence. Search the online Support Directory using the word ELAN, for example, and you'll be directed to Section 10, "Elan Software," in the Windows 3rd Party Applications A Forum, where this producer of contact-management software for networks tends shop. The section is humming (four support engineers answer up to 350 messages a week), but the activity is proportional to Elan's customer base. If you search for IBM, however, the directory will call up dozens of IBM-sponsored forums that cater to developers and users around the world. The IBM PSM Deutschland Forum, for example, operates in German.

Depending on the criteria entered, Support Directory searches often yield a combination of company-run and independent forums (see "Support," p. 14). Search for APPLE, for example, and 25 services—including three Apple-sponsored forums, nine user-supported MAUG forums, and seven sections within the Apple II Vendor Forum—will be listed. The mix of forums a search will turn up varies from case to case.

In many forums, whether company-sponsored or independent, a response to a posting can be expected in a day or two; if members are active, it may take as little as an hour. Sysops often post turnaround times in forum Welcome Notices, so members can know what to expect. Some computing-forum staffers pride themselves in replying as quickly as possible—the company-sponsored Toshiba Forum, for example, averages a response time of under eight hours, "something our members and visitors tell us is phenomenal for a vendor support forum as active as ours," says sysop Rohrer. Toshiba's secret? Instead of categorizing message sections by product model, Rohrer has arranged his by situation. Problems his users face, he explains, often have more in common than hardware, and his team of corporate and volunteer technical specialists spend less time looking at all the sections and focus on a few where there's more similarity. "This makes the most of our staff and volunteer manpower," says Rohrer.

The most responsive support forums usually have volunteers to thank. "This user-to-user bond is what makes CompuServing in the forums so special," says Ortiz of the Multimedia forums. Sometimes volunteers rally around a product outside of organized efforts by the sponsoring company—such was the case in the "FAST Multimedia AG" section of the Multimedia B Vendor Forum, where continuing discussions among members led to the conception of a user-help database. "The forum members are planning to post a list of their names, CIS mail addresses, and the respective FAST products they work with," says



When Toshiba Forum message traffic doubled, sysop Jim Rohrer found a "voluntary" solution.

The Laptop Squad to the Rescue

Jim Rohrer never saw it coming. Sysop of the Toshiba Forum, a vendor-sponsored forum for users of Toshiba laptop computers, Rohrer had been happily managing a steady flow of troubleshooting messages. Then his company, Toshiba America Information Systems, did something in April 1993 that changed his job forever. It began selling machines in high-volume, low-price superstores. Sales of the notebook computers went through the roof, and the daily message flow in his forum doubled in a matter of days.

"As you can imagine, this stretched our resources to the breaking point," Rohrer remembers. "I was literally working on messages all day in the office, coming home and continuing work on my notebook PC until I dropped, and doing the same thing the next day, day after day. My small staff was under enormous stress to keep up with the constant incoming flow."

After eight months of forum plate-spinning, Rohrer concluded the increase in traffic was no blip—due to the combination of higher laptop sales and CompuServe's quickly growing member base, Toshiba Forum activity was there to stay. With no budget to add to his full-time support team, Rohrer turned to the members of the forum for help. He sent private e-mail messages to 25 longtime Toshiba Forum members, requesting their input for developing a peer-support program, and opened a private message section in the forum for their ideas.

A month later Team Toshiba, a volunteer force of answer men and women, was introduced to the forum membership. "And the rest, as they say, is history," Rohrer says.

Message activity doubled again in 1994, to about 12,000 messages per month, but Rohrer says the team manages to respond to postings addressed to SYSOP in less than eight hours.

Between them, the band of volunteers (all longtime lappers, as they call themselves) has seen it all.

Most Team Toshiba members have other full-time jobs (one is a corporate president, another is a playwright), and Rohrer repays them by treating them as valued members of the company. He invited each volunteer to a corporate-service advisory conference in Irvine, California, last year, drawing members from points as far as New York, San Francisco, and Dallas. The team members participated in corporate training sessions, took tours of the Toshiba plant, and watched as one outstanding volunteer, Jim Franklin, was awarded the company's highest customer-service award. "It was the high point of the meetings," says Rohrer. "The presentation in front of all the attendees made a statement about how important Team Toshiba is to the company."

Such occasional perks, though, are only modest compensation for the hundreds of hours the team gives to the forum. "I think the main benefits are the satisfaction of sharing knowledge and the camaraderie we all enjoy as a group," Rohrer says. "We do what we can, when we can, and hope to find more ways to express our appreciation to the team, but they are truly a volunteer peer-support group." The team is so efficient, Rohrer says, that some have been recruited by other laptop-oriented sysops to join their areas.

"Actually, I'm rather honored by their efforts to lure away our team members," he says, "including offers of free computers, trips to the Super Bowl, and all-expenses-paid trips to Comdex. More gratifying, though, is the fact that they haven't drawn anyone out of Team Toshiba to join their group."

-GG



Same Service, New Name: PCNet

When IBMNET was founded 10 years ago, about the only computer compatible with an IBM PC was another IBM PC. But times have changed, and so has the name for this collection of PC-related user-support forums. IBM-NET is now called PCNet to reflect the many different computer brands that share similar operating systems.

"Over the years, compatibles became major players and the scope of the forums expanded to include all PCs," says chief PCNet sysop Don Watkins. "After a lot of consideration and despite the goodwill associated with the old name, we elected to change it to reflect the true nature of the forums."

PCNet is operated by the same team of sysops as before, and the old IBMNET Go commands will continue to take members to the renamed PCNet areas.

The change does mark some expansion: the entertainment areas in the former New Users Forum have been relocated to the new PCNet Fun Forum. Other content from the New Users Forum is now in the PCNet Welcome Center, which includes broader coverage of areas for new users.

To access an enhanced menu that introduces the PCNet forums, GO PCNET.

—GG

Ortiz. "The purpose is to have a quick and easy reference for those interested in contacting others who may assist in particular problems."

Larry Waibel, one of 32 volunteer OS/2 advisers, spends two to three hours a day answering questions and dispensing advice in the IBM OS/2 Support Forum—in addition to his regular 9-to-5 job as a software engineer. "I've found that the best way to learn is to

hang out reading all I can and answer questions," he says. "You'd be amazed how much you can learn when helping someone with his own problem."

According to both company technical reps and independents, members are best served when they enter support forums with realistic expectations. While users often get answers during weekends, holidays, and other times when a phone call is impossible, it's important to understand that Rome wasn't debugged in a day. "Sometimes users get a little too caught up in the 'immediate' nature of the online world and expect the rest of the world to keep up at the speed of e-mail, which just doesn't happen," says ATI's Arbeid. "There are some bugs that really do exist in software that take time to report and correct."

In a recent OS/2 Support Forum thread, which snowballed into more than 100 messages over one weekend, everyone from sysops to former IBM employees to disgruntled and satisfied consumers alike argued after a member told of suffering one OS/2 Warp installation snafu after another. Tony Traughber, a retired 33-year veteran of Big Blue, became so involved he offered to drive anywhere within 100 miles of his Ventura, California, residence to help. (The unhappy member, he learned later, lived in Mississippi.) When the member concluded that Warp's problems must be daunting, considering the hundreds of questions posted in the forum, sysop Spalten stepped in to remind him that this is a support forum and that it's rare for someone to show up simply to say everything's OK. By and large, vendor forums are places where people go to rant, not rave.

What to Expect

The common infrastructure of message sections and libraries shared by all CompuServe support forums allows for a sometimes surprising variety of cultures and styles of interaction. "The tone of a particular vendor section is strongly influenced by the [person] who monitors that section," says Ortiz. Some forums exist only for the bottomline purpose of resolving questions, and their staff and members are happiest when the discussion stays on the topic and questions are addressed in terse, two- or three-message threads. Other forums encourage a bit more

expression of personal interest.

FEATURE

Last January, for example, the text of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech was featured in the Toshiba Forum, in honor of the U.S. national holiday held in the name of the civil-rights leader. In the Canopus Research Forum, an area sponsored by a computer-industry research firm, libraries contain everything from member résumés to the

complete text of the U.S. assault-weapons ban. In addition, an entire section in the Canopus Forum is devoted to

discussion of philosophy and religion (one recent thread grew to more than 200 messages in less than a week), and another is set aside for "Nasty Threads," where the raciest discussions are archived away from the eyes of more sensitive members. And in the "Diamond Computer Systems" library within the Graphics B Vendor Forum, a JPEG "greeting card" of a Yak's face was "sent" by the members of the Photodex Forum. It's enough to make a member wonder: Aren't these places supposed to be devoted to chips, disks, and drives?

"Human-interest topics that arise in a technically oriented forum help contribute to a feeling of community that goes beyond the basic function of the forum," says Toshiba's Rohrer, who uploaded the King speech and announced it in a News Flash. "In small doses it helps take the edge off all the technical content."

"We try to make neophyte PC users and hardcore hackers feel right at home," adds Rohrer. "The good mood tends to be contagious, and I think it encourages lurkers to become participants."

Eric Welch, a photojournalist for the *News Press* in St. Joseph, Missouri, "stumbled across" the Canopus Research Forum after hearing it was a good place to discuss the OS/2 platform and enjoy the distinct tone set by sysop William Zachmann, a writer and OS/2-phile who encourages exploration of decidedly non-computer subjects. "I've always enjoyed his point of view," says Welch of Zachmann. "Other vendors that don't have this kind of discussion don't get my attention unless I'm having a problem or anticipating some announcement in that vendor's product line. I have more fun in Canopus than just about anywhere else."

While most sysops agree that the occasional surprising upload or discussion adds to the flavor of the area and keeps members (especially new ones) involved, all agree there's a fine line between enhancement and distraction. If overdone, Toshiba's Rohrer admits, unrelated GIFs and politics can result in a loss of focus and effectiveness.

"I think it can make new users more confused in that they begin to look in that forum

for something that might be far better found outside the forum, with more choices," says MAUG wizop Shapiro. "Vendor forums, in my mind, should focus on vendor-related items. If they try to become a miniature network unto themselves, they may frustrate new users, who could be talking about these issues with a *much* larger audience."

The issue of appropriateness goes beyond library content. Facing thousands of new members each month, section leaders are seeing a gradual change in online etiquette and increasingly demanding member expectations. As strong as the ranting can get, most forums exercise amazing flexibility-rarely do sysops censor discussions, in either company-sponsored or independent areas. In an online democracy, members will quickly lose faith if they see rougher debate removed. But as the computer industry attracts a mass market, user frustration is resulting in what MIDI forums sysop Jim Maki considers an atmospheric change. "Users don't spend as much time reading manuals and aren't thrilled with the challenge of figuring out solutions on their own. [People] expect to plug this stuff into the computer and have it work right away. And when it doesn't, they come online and vent."

While most support forums apply CompuServe's general rules of appropriateness (forum messages should not contain profanity, racial/sexual slurs, or threats), Maki believes such noise, as he calls it, is rising. "Vendors appreciate that people get frustrated and vent online, but they really don't have time to handle all that damage control," he says. "They're starting to feel that it's time for some rules, that venting and flaming are not appropriate. This is a privilege and a service, and if you abuse it, the vendors will stop responding. It gets away from technical support and into public relations."

Maki's solution isn't to edit online discourse but to remind members that ultimately vendors are there to conduct business and that too much negativity distracts from the service. "We are changing our philosophy," he says. "Users are very sensitive to freedom-ofspeech issues, but we're starting to view these areas as a little different from public forums." When Maki comes across an offensive message, he doesn't delete it—"That's censorship," he says. Instead, he moves it into a private sysop section, where only the sysops, the sender, and the recipient can see it, and explains to the sender where and why the message was moved and what the forum's policies are. It's a practice used by other support forums, too.

"The key to success is constructive criticism," says Go Graphics' Drury. "I know of no vendor currently online with us that would have a problem with receiving negative feed-

Most vendors that run just a section have their own Go commands, which usually take you to the general forum where it's maintained and not "inside" the section itself. For example, type GO PKWARE and you'll be taken to the PC Vendor C Forum, where the data-compression specialist is represented in Section 11.

back—in public—that will ultimately improve its product or service." But he adds, "I don't think vendor sections are an appropriate place for vendor bashing."

How to Get the Most Out of It

Online computer support is always evolving in terms of look and feel and who's online. Busy forums split and change names, new sections are added to multi-vendor areas, sysops join and leave the ranks, and brand-new vendors are frequently added to the service. Even long-standing areas undergo an occasional face-lift—IBMNET, which celebrated its 10th birthday last year, recently changed its name (and every related service) to PCNet (see "Same Service, New Name," on p. 16). "In all our forums," says Ortiz of his multimedia offerings, "we keep an eye out for new interests and mold our sections according to our users' needs. It's a way to change with the times."

The best way to stay abreast of new and different forums is to make a habit of reading Welcome messages, News Flashes, and other instructional notices. These notices often explain the subtle but important differences between the forums, such as average message response times, and list conference schedules, new uploads, and sysop User ID numbers. It's where you'll find everything from forum etiquette and rules to new-product announcements and other goodies. If, for example, a forum's shareware file is featured in CompuServe Magazine, chances are good it will be announced in the News Flash.

No two News Flashes are the same, however. In the Intel Forum, a recent News Flash announced the company's 1994 earnings-pershare as well as its policy toward replacing the floating-point-flawed Pentium processors. In one of Microsoft's developer-oriented areas, a press release was posted announcing that would-be attendees wanting to get into a company-sponsored trade meeting would be turned away due to overwhelming registration at the event.

In almost every New Member welcome message that appears the first time a member enters a computer support forum, the sysops post a reassuring note saying, essentially, that no question is a dumb one. And they mean it they want to help. But it's easier for them to lend a hand if members include some basic information that's common to virtually every technical query. With just a bit more detail, members can get an answer much faster. Fail to include certain facts, and sysops and volunteers are forced to speculate. "You don't know how many messages we get that basically say 'It doesn't work' or that it 'hung,' " says Spalten of the IBM OS/2 Support Forum. "How's that for a description that allows me to answer intelligently?

At the very least, Spalten and others say that when members first post messages, they should:

- make sure it's properly addressed—a message to SYSOP in a multi-vendor forum is often too vague. Always check the sysop roster.
- include the version and type of operating system, the hardware configuration (including peripherals, etc.), and total RAM.
- describe the problem in detail (what you were doing before the problem, what happened, and what, if any, error message appeared).
- include any customer-service reference numbers you may have been provided during a previous call made to a support phone line
- if possible, include a sequential list of steps taken so far in an effort to solve the prob-
- if appropriate to the system, list the contents of the CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files.
- and finally, if you're in a rush, first check for a FAQ or other file in a library section. Chances are good that someone else had a similar problem first and the solution is documented there.

If you're ever at a loss for where to go, post a question asking for suggestions in an area that seems as if it would be related. That's a no-brainer for sysops; they're happy to point you in a direction where you might solve the problem on your own.

And that's what online support is all about—encouraging people to share experiences to solve problems.

See "Tech-Help Databases," page 18, and "Vendor Menus," page 19.

Look It Up Yourself: Tech-Help Databases

Technical information comes in handy when computer users shop for hardware or software or battle malfunctions in what they've got. "By definition, technical information provides directions, specifications, descriptions, compatibility, troubleshooting, or maintenance information," says Sonia Segmund, the Apple Support Forum's (GO APLSUP) lead sysop.

While most vendors upload helpful "tech info" about their products to forum libraries, some establish separate databases of documentation. These databases tend to be more comprehensive in the number of products covered; they also allow full-text searches, which command the database to look for designated words mentioned anywhere in a document's text (a searching option not available in forums). Full-text searches generally result in more matches than keyword searches, because the latter look only at words that appear in a document's headline.

Following is a list of several technical-information databases accessible via Compu-Serve. Each database listed is an extended service, with the exception of Support On Site, which carries an additional charge beyond extended-services rates. To see if a vendor not listed here provides a technical-information database, use the Find command with the vendor name as the keyword, such as FIND IBM.



Apple Technical Information Library GO APLTIL

Updated weekly, this "library" is Apple's official technical-support database, containing 4,500 of the most recent articles on Apple products, old and new. The Apple Assistance Center uses the same database to answer customers' questions. Articles offer advice on troubleshooting, compatibility, workarounds, and more. Search by product category or search the full text for designated words. You can also narrow the search by publication date-either the date the document was published on, before, or after. For search instructions, choose About the Apple Technical Information Library from the GO APLTIL menu. Send questions about using this area via CompuServe Mail to one of the Apple Support Forum sysops.



Claris TechInfo Database GO CLARIS

This database contains about 4,000 arti-

cles about Claris Products, including answers to technical questions and suggested ways to creatively use Claris products you own. Search by product name, publication date, document ID number, operating environment, or full text or keyword. For help using the database, post a message to SYSOP in one of the Claris support forums (GO CLARIS).

Lotus

Lotus Technical Library GO LTL

A comprehensive collection of Lotus-product information, this database contains more than 8,000 files with answers to common questions, tips for effective product use, and guidelines for troubleshooting technical problems. Researched and written by Lotus customer-support staff, the information covers all Lotus products and releases. Each entry includes a title indicating the topic, the name of the relevant product or products, the date the item was written or last updated, an explanation of the problem (including symptoms and potential error messages), and a solution. explanation, or suggested workaround. For information on searching options and tips on developing the best possible search, GO LTL and select User's Guide. Then select Search Strategy from the resulting menu. Post a message to SYSOP in any Lotus support forum (GO LOTUS) for assis-

Microsoft

Microsoft Knowledge Base G0 MSKB

Microsoft Knowledge Base offers access to more than 35,000 product-support documents previously available only to Microsoft support staff. Articles tell about new developments in software programs and how to most effectively use a particular package. A new CIM interface to this area lets you search in the typical manner (by product name or version, operating system, publication date, document type, full text, or keywords) and two other methods: Expert Mode (for advanced database users who want to input search criteria not offered on the menus) and QuickSearch (to retrieve a document by ID number). For more information about all three search options, access the Online User's Guide from the GO MSKB main menu. Post questions or requests for help to SYSOP in any Microsoft support forum (GO MICROSOFT)

Note that some articles in the database refer to related files available in the Microsoft Software Library (GO MSL). In these cases, the article lists an "S" number. For example, S12378 would be the name of the file downloadable from the Software Library (e.g., S12378.EXE).

M NOVELL.

Novell Technical Information Database G0 NTID

This daily updated database includes all of Novell's technical-information documents, files, patches, and fixes, including those available in the Novell User Library Forum and the Novell Files Download area, more than 6,000 files in sum. These files offer the latest technical solutions for all Novell products. Search by product classification (such as product name, category, version, or line), file type (ASCII, binary, or both), file name, submission date (which narrows the search to documents uploaded since the date specified), or document ID number. Search instructions are available on the GO NTID main menu as Option 2, Instructions for Searching. Post a message to SYSOP in any Novell support forum (GO NOVELL) for help.

ZiffNET

Support On Site GO ONSITE

This database contains material from books, newsletters, manuals, and technical notes that gives the latest software advice. It also provides software direct from manufacturers. The information covers software from such companies as Borland, Claris, Lotus Development, Microsoft, Symantec, and WordPerfect. A complete list of products covered is available as file SOSPRO.TXT in the Ziff Support Forum (GO ZIFFHELP), which is free of connect-time charges for CompuServe and ZiffNet members. The file is located in Library 13, "Support On Site."

The database is searchable by product name, publication name, document type, or full text. Instructions for using the database are available from the GO ONSITE main menu under the Basic Instructions option. If you have further questions on how to use the database, post a message to the sysops in the Ziff Support Forum's Section 13, "Support On Site O&A"

ZiffNet is part of CompuServe's extended services and carries an additional membership fee. GO ZIFFMEM for details.

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Using CompuServe's Vendor Menus

If you always access a support forum via its specific Go command, you may not know about related forums and areas online. Often, such areas are accessible via a main menu, a point of entry offering a broader list of options. Borland, for example, offers its latest press releases, a research-and-development suggestion "box," an explanation of its technical-support programs, a list of current job openings, and more, all via a main menu that results when you type GO BORLAND. Proceed directly to the Borland Applications Forum using GO BORAPP and you could miss some of these features. Similarly, if you type GO MAC you'll access a menu offering not only Macvendor and user-to-user support forums, but Apple News Clips, Mac FileFinder, and the MAUG Newsletter and file-of-the-month.

Each main menu is set up a bit differently-some offer options that take you directly to the area mentioned (the Apple Support Forum option on the Apple menu takes you directly to that forum, for example), while others (such as the Microsoft Connection) are set up like menu trees, with options on the main menu leading to additional menus from which to choose. The following is a list of main menus offering a broad range of related information. One important note: some of these areas feature "enhanced" (graphical) menus, viewable in recent versions of CIM. Because enhanced menus are dynamic, changing to highlight new offerings, those we show and describe here may have been altered since press time.

Apple GO APLNEW

Apple's main menu provides access to the Apple Support Forum, a libraries-only forum containing current software updates, press releases, product information, past issues of Apple Support's biweekly electronic magazine, and information on how to contact the company. It also offers the Apple What's New Library, a collection of the latest and most popular Apple software updates available up to three weeks before the release date.

Another option leads you to the Apple Technical Information Library, the company's official technical-support database with information about Apple products past and present. Apple support staff use this same database to answer customers' questions. Also, the Feedback Area option offers a form for making suggestions about Apple's online area.

AtariNet GO ATARINET

AtariNet's main menu offers access to the Atari Gaming, Computing, and Vendors forums as well as other handy features. What's New in Atari Forums pulls up a menu of information about new forum files, sections, vendors, and more (see New in Atari Forums on the resulting menu). It also includes an overview of AtariNet's forums, a weekly conference schedule, sysop names and User ID

numbers, and forum help and information. Atari File Finder gives access to a searchable database of files available in Atari-related forums.

Borland International G0 BORLAND

You'll find a slew of services under Borland's main menu. There are Borland's many support forums, including the Borland Deutschland Forum conducted in German, as well as the latest Borland press releases. A single Product Descriptions, Books, What's New option offers product descriptions, a list of books that cover Borland products, and current Borland-related news. A Customer Service/Product Registration option lets you send an online message to Borland's customer-service department and register products electronically.

Other features include a price list for U.S. products, an R&D suggestion "box," information about Borland's technical-support programs, a list of employment opportunities, and a Mailing List Preference option to change or remove your name or address from the company's mailing list.

CDROM Forums G0 CDROM



The CDROM forums' main menu ties together the CDROM Forum, the CDROM Vendors forums, and related information. For forum descriptions, select Welcome to the CDROM Forums. Sysop's Download Pick of the Month describes a useful file residing in one of the CDROM forums. News about the latest vendors offering support in the CDROM Vendors forums can be found under Meet Our Newest Vendors. CDROM Titles Database takes you to the CDROM Authority Database, a master list of all discs available in the U.S. and Canada complete with publishers' contact information, from toll-free numbers to e-mail addresses. Other choices allow you to learn about the latest CD-ROM news and upcoming CD-ROM-related events taking place online or being reported about in the forums.

Computer Associates International GO CAI

Computer Associates' main menu gives an explanation of C.A.'s online offerings, under About Computer Associates Int'l. You can also reach the wide array of C.A. English- and German-language support forums. CA News tells you how to look for the most current C.A. press releases and announcements in its forums' libraries. Other menu options provide product information and downloadable software updates.

Desktop/Electronic Publishing Forums

If you're interested in CompuServe's desk-top-publishing resources, this menu provides a one-stop shop. A Desktop Publishing Related Forums option takes you to a menu of 17 forums and services, from the Adobe Forum to the Photos-to-Go image database. Also, choose Desktop Publishing Vendor Forums and get a menu listing companies and Go commands for the forums in which they offer support (by picking a vendor from the menu, you launch directly into the appropriate forum). There are also options for reaching the Desktop Publishing, Desktop Publishing Vendor A and B, and the Quark Online Users forums directly

You're also given the chance to download fonts, clip art, and graphics from the DTP OnLine and *Jerry's World* collections.

Graphics GO GRAPHICS



Besides the graphics vendors forums, members can use this menu to access the Graphics Welcome Center (the place to go with questions about how to view and download images) and the Graphics Support Forum (another source of help on viewing, downloading, converting, and printing graphics). You can also access the Graphics File Finder to quickly locate images residing in the graphics forums, and the Graphics Visual Index Forum to see thumbnail images of GIF and JPEG collections before downloading the full-size pictures. Also, view a regularly updated featured image culled from one of the graphics forums and made available under Featured Image.

Pointers to other forums with graphics lead you to surprising places, such as the Automobile, Racing, and Travel forums. Further menu offerings include access to the remaining support and archive forums, map services including MAGELLAN maps and weather maps, and a form for nominating an image for *CompuServe Magazine*'s Graphic of the Month contest.

Hewlett-Packard

The Hewlett-Packard main menu offers access to several support forums sponsored by Hewlett-Packard but run by independent volunteers. In addition, an HP Specials option gives access to the HP Special Library, with utility files that sometimes aren't available in the forum libraries due to licensing agreements. The HP Specials option also includes other, rotating features such as online registration for OmniBooks and instructions for ordering a DeskWriter/DeskJet upgrade kit online.

IBM Online G0 IBM

IBM's main menu is the best inroad to IBM's variety of online offerings. For an overview of IBM Online, select the About IBM Online option. Choose Hot Off the Press for news about the latest products, promotions, and business ventures.

PC Product Information provides product specifications, while news of upcoming events is available under Events/Shows/Conferences. Marketing Programs and Information tells how to enroll in programs such as the IBM BESTeam and OS/2 Certification programs.

You can also sign up for IBM users' courses via the Education/Training option. IBM support forums, vendor forums, and contact information for customer service can be accessed under Technical Services and Support. Other options allow you to order OS/2 Warp or access PCNet Online.

Lotus's World of Lotus G0 LOTUS

GO LOTUS takes you to a menu with access to the Lotus English and German support forums and much more. You can access Lotus press releases organized by month and year in the Press Releases Forum, available under Lotus Press Releases and News. Or, pick Lotus Technical and reach the Lotus Technical Library, stocked with product information. The Lotus Idea Line is available for submitting suggestions about Lotus products. Other options provide access to the CompuServe Lotus Notes Information Service (an e-mail service for Lotus Notes software users) and a World of Lotus survey.

MAUG (Micronetworked Apple Users Group) GO MAC

From this menu, you can access the MAUG user-to-user support forums, the Macintosh vendor support forums, and the ZiffNet/Mac and ZiffNet/MacUser forums. Other choices allow you to read the MAUG Newsletter, a monthly electronic publication serving the online Mac community, and download a Spotlight File of the Month. Also, access the Mac FileFinder to look for files tucked away in Mac-related forums. Apple News Clips, which are also accessible from this menu, display recent news stories about Apple Computer Inc. and its products.

Microsoft Connection G0 MICROSOFT

Microsoft ties together a large number of its own areas as well as related, independent areas through this main menu. For a description of Microsoft Connection offerings, select



the option titled About the Microsoft Connection.

Via a Support Forums and Services option you can access Microsoft support forums and services conducted in English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. Windows Shareware Forums provides access to independently run Windows shareware forums and CompuServe's Shareware Registration. Also, chooseWindows Independent Product Support and get a menu with support forums full of Windows-related vendors.

Other options let you access Windows News Clips, which displays recent news articles about Windows software, forums dedicated to publications that cover Microsoft products (select Support Publications Forums), CompuServe's Support Directory, the Microsoft Sales Support Forum, Microsoft's Electronic Mall store, and the Microsoft Press Online Bookstore.

Microsoft U.S. GO MSUSER

A layer within the Microsoft Connection, this menu lists and allows access to Microsoft's English-language online areas. To reach it via the Microsoft Connection main menu, GO MICROSOFT and select Option 2, Support Forums and Services, and then Option 2, English Product Support-Microsoft UK, US. To reach it directly, GO MSUSER.

An Information on Microsoft option tells about the company's technical-support services (select the About Microsoft Support Network option from the resulting menu), gives information about user classes offered at authorized training centers, and provides addresses and phone numbers for contacting Microsoft.

Further menu options let you access Microsoft Knowledge Base, a comprehensive collection of technical-support articles; Microsoft Software Library, a collection of Microsoft software files; the Microsoft Press Online Bookstore, under Microsoft Mall; and a host of Microsoft forums for developers and users.

From this menu you can also access Windows shareware and independent support forums and forums with publications that cover Microsoft products.

Novell NetWire G0 NOVELL

Novell's online offerings are vast; this menu makes navigating them easier. Members new to Novell's online areas will



first want to choose New User Info for a helpful explanation. New and old users will both benefit from the information about new Novell files, recently added online offerings, and upcoming trade shows, conferences, and events available under What's New.

The Service & Support option leads to even more choices. You'll find files, patches, and fixes; Technical Information Documents with technical information about Novell products; application notes; descriptions and direct access to Novell's message forums under Messages (Questions & Answers); information programs: Novell's about training Professional Development Bullets; a forum covering WordPerfect Magazine WordPerfect for Windows and the ability to subscribe online; Novell Labs Bulletins; and the CompuServe Support Directory.

A File Updates option takes you to the Novell Technical Information Database, top file downloads, descriptions of Novell's file libraries, and several Novell forums. A Sales & Marketing option leads to a NetWare Buyers Guide, Novell press releases and success stories, information about Novell events, a Marketing Literature Price List you can download and order from online, and addresses and phone numbers for contacting Novell.

By selecting Novell Programs you get information about Novell's professional-developer programs and educational and certification courses, a list of requirements and benefits of becoming a Novell Authorized Service Center, and an explanation of NetWare Users International, an independent network of user groups.

PCNet Online G0 PCNET

This menu makes available descriptions of PCNet and its offerings under Overview. It also leads you directly to the PCNet forums for user-to-user support, PC and LAN vendor forums for support from manufacturers, and other forums such as the General Computing and ASP/Shareware forums. PCNet founder and sysop Don Watkins selects utilities and makes them easy to download by placing them under Top Utilities. Also, access the PC File Finder to quickly search for and download files from PC-related forums.

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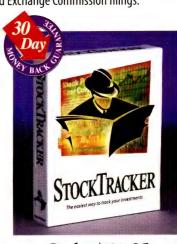
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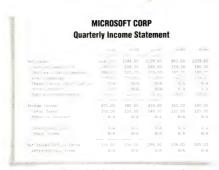
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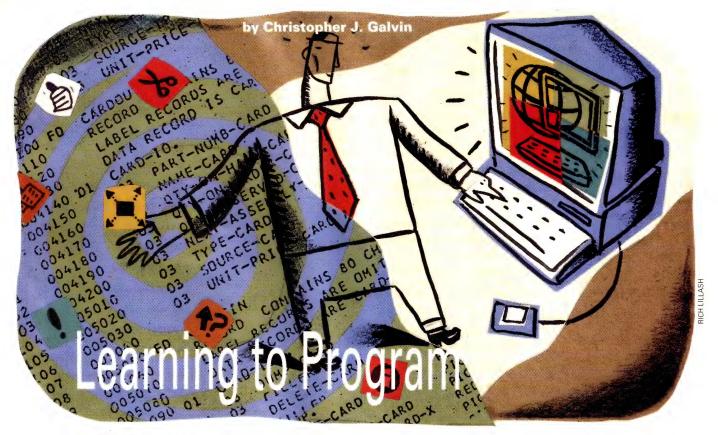
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Where to GO

Game Developers Forum **GO GAMDEV**

Macintosh Developers Forum **GO MACDEV**

Macintosh Scripting/Hypercard Forum

GO MACHYPER

Microsoft BASIC Forum

GO MSBASIC

OS/2 Developers Forum1

GO OS2DF1

PC Programming Forum

GO PCPROG

Visual Basic Programmer's Journal Forum

GO VBPJFORUM

Windows Components Forums A and B GO COMPA

GO COMPB

The code that becomes software isn't so secret anymore, and with online help you can try your hand.

If you're intrigued by the notion of writing a script by which your computer will do something useful or create something nice to look at, take heart: programming has become less and less the exclusive province of people with computer-science degrees. All kinds of computer users are now telling their PCs what to do and getting responses. Attribute this to programming object modules (present in languages and environments such as C++ and Macintosh's HyperCard) that pass messages to each other and are reusable in other programs, and a wave of visual-development environments in the last three years that let you create windowed programs in much the same way that you use windowed programs. Both have shortened the learning curve and the amount of time required to produce a working program.

And whether you make use of available books, videos, or training classes to learn a language, online forums devoted to general programming or a brand of programming products are an excellent supplement to your studies. They can provide sample source code, study groups, and, best of all, thousands of the "further-along" friends most programmers say you should have when entering the months and years of work involved. Following is a look at ways you can get started in the major platforms and one very popular application-creation field, PC games.

Windows Programming

Learning to create applications in the Windows environment has become a lot easier in the last several years, due to a highly popular programming tool released by Microsoft called Visual Basic. The tool has enabled business-software developers and, more importantly, novice Windows users to quickly create moderately sized Windows programs without knowing the intricacies of the C programming language or using Microsoft's Development Kit. Instead of writing lines of code, Visual Basic users pick up tools from a palette and draw their interface controls onto a form or screen. Then they assign properties for their controls, such as default text in an entry field, or a label on a button. Through code windows that correlate to each of the controls, the author then defines what each control should do for each particular event it might receive (such as being clicked on or having a number typed in).

"It has a very low learning curve, and it doesn't take you very long to make something that works. People tell their friends, 'You won't believe what I was just able to do,'" says Deborah Kurata, a programming consultant and leader of the "Beginner's Corner" section of the Visual Basic Programmer's Journal Forum, online home of a journal covering professional V.B.-application development. "Originally, Visual Basic was just going to provide a way to manage your desktop environment, but it was expanded into something that can do just about anything."

Most beginners, Kurata says, start with a program whose purpose interests them, such as tracking tennis matches or bowling scores, managing a soccer league or social club, or a customized desktop function. Reading through the messages in the VBPJ Forum of-

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fers insight on different projects and programming to try, and the discussions in Kurata's section cover everything from where to start to specific programming problems to design concepts.

Creating the entire program from scratch may not even be necessary. Visual Basic programming can include the use of add-on custom controls called VBXs, which are pre-written reusable blocks of code that perform certain functions. Many are sold by third-party vendors (even in retail chain computer stores); others are downloadable online as shareware and freeware. "There's a tremendous number of VBXs—the book that lists the third-party products is an inch thick," says Kurata. "In every place where Visual Basic falls short even a little bit, there's a vendor who has jumped in and tried to provide a solution." The Windows Components forums A and B house many of these VBX manufacturers.

Kurata recommends beginners pick up the software and one of the endless supply of introductory work-you-through-it books such as *Visual Basic for Dummies* (IDG Books, 1994) or *Teach Yourself Visual Basic 3.0 for Windows in 21 Days* (SAMS, 1993). Also ask questions of the forums' many V.B. experts, she says, and play with the sample code that comes with the package or that exists in great abundance in the forums' libraries. "A lot of times it's easier starting out with someone else's code than coming up with something from scratch," she says.

Brian Locke, a programmer who has used Visual Basic for a year and a half, still spends lots of time in the VBPJ Forum as well as the PC Programming Forum (which also covers programming using the various kinds of text-based BASIC, Assembler, and C and C++). "I download every file I see that says it contains source code," he says. "I do my best learning by observing other techniques and combining those things that make sense to me." Locke also checks through the posted messages regularly, looking especially for replies from key authors of V.B. programming books. "If there's a topic you need answers on, rest assured you can search the message base and library files and find the information you need," he says.

As a person who "hates to open up a manual," V.B. programmer Kurt Tietjen would rather post a message in the Microsoft BASIC Forum (another good source of VBXs; see "Programming-Related Forums," on p. 24) to find his way around a sticking point in building programs like his shareware retirement planner Pers-R. "If I have a question about something, 999 times out of a thousand someone else online has already conquered the problem," he says, adding that many of his posts garner five detailed responses. "I honestly don't think I would know much at all about Visual Basic if it weren't for this forum."

Tietjen works with many commercial VBXs, too, from vendors he found online. The add-ons let him use custom controls, create graphs, and control functions within xBase-compatible databases such as FoxPro and Clipper. "All of the controls perform tasks that would take me hundreds of hours of programming time to complete," he says.

Programming Macs

For owners of Macintosh machines, the choice of language for beginners is widely thought to be C and C++, particularly those of Symantec (whose C programming environment is THINK C). And the best bets for learning them quickly are considered to be Dave Mark's books Learn C on the Macintosh and Learn C++ on the Macintosh (Addison-Wesley, 1991 and 1993). "In Mac programming, Pascal's popularity is waning, and C's is getting stronger," says Mark, who maintains a presence in the "Learning Programming" section of the Macintosh Developers Forum. "Some people say you should learn C++ as your first language, but they're probably natural-born programmers. I think that's tackling an awful lot," Mark says. He notes that C++ is a superset of C, with additional syntax and the concept of object programming thrown in.

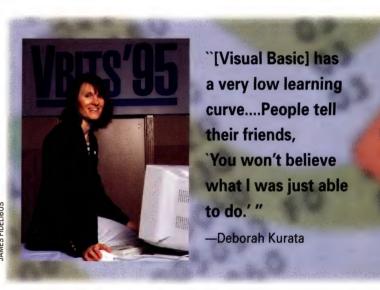
Learning C as a first step lets users get a grasp on fundamental programming concepts (such as pointers and other basic data structures, flow control, and writing bug-free code), using a "console" interface that resembles a DOS command line: print out a line asking for input, get input, go to the next line. However, programming using the Mac's distinctive menus, pull-down menus, and windows requires one to graduate to C++. "Once you pass C++, you want to learn about and adopt a class library, such as Symantec's THINK Class Library, Metrowerks' PowerPlant, or Apple's MacApp," says Mark. Class libraries provide a

framework allowing the easier building of programming objects such as windows. "You only have to learn it once. It's a big investment, but once you've learned it, you have a very strong knowledge base from which to create applications," says Mark.

Forum members occasionally organize into an online study group, traversing one of Mark's books chapter by chapter, attempting small programming exercises and asking questions of each other. Experience of the groups' members can range "from none at all to 30 years," says Dave Nicely, organizer of a recent C++ class. "We wanted to come together because of a common complaint we all had: when you get stuck or confused, you feel like you have no one to turn to."

Programming environments such as THINK C and Metrowerks' popular CodeWarrior can be immensely helpful to beginners, says Charlie Shehadi, because "you get everything you need when you write a program in one package: a text editor, compiler, linker, and debugger, all working together and 'talking' to each other to make life easier," he says. Shehadi, a master's-degree student of computer art at New York's School of Visual Arts, is working on a 3-D virtual-reality art program that will let users "paint in thin air" and has used online forums for programming help after leaving the learning environment of undergraduate classes. Such integrated packages, he says, sometimes include interface building, which allows programmers to graphically build an interface while the environment writes the actual C code that supports it.

"If you want to have a dialog box that displays a picture and has buttons, you can drag familiar Mac icons, buttons, and menus into place," says Shehadi. Symantec's C++ Visual Architect includes this but is really only for programmers already adept at using C, he says.



If starting with C-level language makes you nervous, a BASIC language such as Zedcor's FutureBASIC might make you more comfortable, says Carl Powell, a shareware and book author and co-sysop of the Scuba Forum. "The syntax is easier to understand than C or Pascal, and the compilers are very inexpensive," he says. Zedcor's package comes with very basic information about how to program and how the Macintosh works. "It's feasible to go from ground zero to full programming with this language and little else," Powell says.

The scripting used within Apple's AppleScript, HyperTalk, and ResEdit, as well as UserLand Frontier's UserTalk, is also not a bad place to start, says John Kawakami, editorial assistant for *MacTech* magazine. *MacTech* is a monthly for Mac developers that publishes a "Getting Started" column written by Mark. Source code pertaining to each column's topic is uploaded to the magazine's library in the Macintosh Developers Forum. Also uploaded soon will be Apple's Universal Headers, pieces of code which interface a programmer's code with the Mac's System. With them, programmers will be able to write one program that works on both 68000-series and Power Mac machines.

"Beginners should get their hands dirty. Muck around in the

System," says Kawakami. "HyperCard is a good environment to study, since it gives you immediate feedback and is fun to use. Experimenting with ResEdit teaches you how Macintosh applications are put together, where the icons come from, and where the sounds are stored," he says. Creating System-controlling scripts in AppleScript (or UserLand's Frontier or CE Software's QuickKeys) isn't just experimentation, it's real programming, he adds, even though it may shield the user from certain difficulties of dealing with the Mac operating system. "Many of the same issues faced by professional programmers confront the amateur scripter. You get to deal with sophisticated stuff like Apple

Events." AppleScript is also easy to learn and has more and better tutorial books written about it, he says.

HyperCard's HyperTalk and AppleScript are supported in the Macintosh Scripting/Hypercard Forum,

where users get support from each other and Danny Goodman, author of *The Complete Hypercard 2.2 Handbook* and *The Complete Applescript Handbook* (both Random House, 1993). Says Goodman, "Scripting is an excellent way to learn many basic programming concepts that are needed for languages such as C. Scripting environments let you see results quickly because you can accomplish much in only a few lines of code."

Above all, Nicely encourages new programmers to stay committed; he compares learning a new programming language to becoming comfortable with the online language and culture of forums—an experience most users can relate to. "The more you consistently work at it, the more familiar and comfortable you feel with its syntax, rules, and use," he says.

OS/2 Programming

Programming in IBM's OS/2 operating system has benefited from a Visual Basic-like renaissance as well, says Frank Fortson, author of

RPF Zip Control, a point-and-click interface to an OS/2 freeware ZIP utility. "The releases of Hockware's VisPro/REXX, Watcom's Vx-REXX, and Computer Associates' CA-Realizer OS/2 developer environments

have made it just as easy for rookie or wannabe OS/2 developers to build professional-looking OS/2 applications," he says. The object-oriented visual-development tools take IBM's Restructured Extended Executor (REXX) procedural command language, which is to OS/2 what BASIC is to DOS, and give programmers the ability to build GUI elements for their creations without writing them in code. "You can build programs very quickly, and they look really good and are ex-

An Overview of CompuServe's Programming-Related Forums

COMPUTING

SERVICES

There are plenty of forums and services online on CompuServe and ZiffNet for the beginning programmer and longtime code writers learning a new language. (Note: ZiffNet services carry an additional membership fee. GO ZIFFMEM for details.)

GENERAL PROGRAMMING FORUMS

Amiga Tech Forum (GO AMIGATECH)

Has discussion of programming for the Amiga using languages such as Mod-2, Forth, C, ASM, ARexx, and object-oriented AmigaVision and CanDo.

Apple II Programmer Forum (GO APPROG)

A MAUG forum for discussing everything from programming in BASIC and machine language to using powerful graphic interfaces such as HyperStudio.

CASE-DCI Forum (GO CASEFORUM)

Sponsored by Digital Consulting Inc., this forum is an independent information exchange about improving the quality of software development by making it more like an engineering discipline. The forum features a Guest of the Month and a software-engineering study group.

Dr. Dobb's Journal Forum (GO DDJFORUM)

Sponsored by *Dr. Dobb's Journal*, a magazine devoted to programming languages, techniques, and tools, the forum makes available source code published in the *Journal* and provides interaction between its editors and readers. Sections cover C, C++, object-oriented languages, UNIX, and help for new programmers.

Game Developers Forum (GO GAMDEV)

A complete clearinghouse for information about creating DOS, Windows, and videogame software, covering design, graphics, sound, legal issues, and marketing. The Computer Game Design Association maintains a presence, and uploads include helpful how-to files; sample source code, games, and demos; and programming-routine libraries.

IBM OS/2 Developers Forum 1 (GO OS2DF1)

Most everything involved in OS/2 programming is covered here, from the Workplace Shell and components to IBM's Clanguage development tools to the visual REXX environments.

Mac Developers Forum (GO MACDEV)

A number of Mac-programming book authors and many more expert programmers make this the best place to ask questions about programming in BASIC, C, Pascal, object-oriented, and other languages. Other sections are devoted to the *Inside Macintosh* books, scripting, learning programming, and Metrowerks, maker of the Code Warrior environment.

Mac Scripting/Hypercard Forum (GO MACHYPER)

Beginners in Macintosh programming should try out the HyperTalk language used to build HyperCard stacks. This forum discusses the language and maintains well-stocked libraries of stacks and external command (XCMD) and external function (XCFN) files.

Microsoft BASIC Forum (GO MSBASIC)

This forum is as much a source of general discussion of Visual Basic programming (and other Microsoft BASIC products) as it

is a source of contact with the company's support representatives. Section 5, "Programming Issues," is a thriving area for how-to help. Libraries are a major source of shareware and freeware VBX extension files, sample code, and more, especially Library 17, "3rd Party Products."

.PC MagNet Programming Forum (GO PROGRAMMING)

This ZiffNet forum provides readers of PC Magazine a place for giving feedback to the editors regarding the magazine's programming-related columns and discussing programming philosophies and tools. Section 15 is home to a well-regarded C++ study group, led by Jesse Liberty, author of Teach Yourself C++ Programming in 21 Days.

PCNet Programming Forum (GO PCPROG)

No matter the language, this forum is a great place for PC-programming beginners to draw on the expertise of PCNet staff and experienced software developers. Message sections and libraries contain a wealth of tips and tutorial information.

Portable Programming Forum (GO CODEPORT)

Sponsored by USUS, an international user group formed in 1980, this forum supports users of the Pascal, Modula-2, Modula-3, and Oberon languages, with an emphasis on engineering applications that are portable between operating systems. Notable is the forum's online course in Eiffel, a small, easy-to-learn object-oriented language well suited to large industrial uses.

tremely functional. On top of all that, it's fun to do."

Visual REXX environments, says Fortson, also let users "sneak up" on more difficult OS/2 languages and slowly learn them by writing certain segments of their programs—those that may be computationally

intensive—in C and C++. "The movement toward C and C++ becomes more manageable and is substantially less intimidating than tackling those languages directly," he says. Beginners may eventually move to visual C/C++ environments such as Hockware's VisPro C/C++, or may make an intermediate stop just before raw C/C++ programming by using products such as JBA's GuideLines. "Here you can continue to program in a BASIC-like language but generate true compiled C/C++ code." Fortson himself ported his RPF Zip Control, written in VisPro/REXX, into GuideLines and then IBM's C/C++ when the program's performance became an issue. The side benefit in either case

is that beginners, while easily creating buttons, list boxes, and other interface controls, get an unplanned education "which helps them move into more traditional developing environments."

Vx-REXX comes strongly recommended by Sean Munoz, a senior

analyst for a systems-integration division of IBM. "It does a great job in helping a developer make the transition out of the sequential-coding mind-set and into an event-driven paradigm. The focus in writing code becomes handling simple events rather than complex scenarios,"

Munoz says. It also helps hide the underlying complexities of OS/2's Presentation Manager APIs. "Having to choose between learning REXX versus the hundreds of OS/2 Application Program Interface calls [program directions that utilize OS/2's repertoire of interface features, such as menus and dialogs] makes Vx-REXX the winner for productivity," he says.

The underlying REXX language itself is a good place to start, says Luis Arguelles, a software engineer for a coal-mining company in Spain. "First of all, it's an interpreter, so a beginner doesn't need to understand concepts like compiling, linking, etc.," he says. "To the virginal eyes of someone coming at the

programming world, it's very simple, powerful, and easy to learn: write some computer phrases—language statements—and run it." If beginners ever need a helping hand, he adds, they may consult members of the OS/2 Developers Forum 1 for help. "It has a wonderful REXX sec-



Public Brand Software Professional Forum (GO PBSPROF)

This ZiffNet forum features what may be the best one-stop shopping source of Windows and DOS shareware and freeware, its Library 13, "Programming." All files are rated on a five-star scale by PBS staff members who test each upload.

Software Development Forum (GO SDFORUM)

A support facility for Software Development magazine, this forum is aimed mainly at professional developers, though beginners are gladly helped. Focus here is mainly on DOS and Windows, and a study group in Section 3, "The Study Hall," regularly reads professional-level books. Windows Tech Journal, PC Techniques, and other publications' staffs are represented.

Visual Basic Programmer's Journal Forum (GO VBPJFORUM)

The online home to this magazine for professional Visual Basic developers, this forum features a very busy "Beginners Corner" section as well as sections on V.B. user groups, OLE automation, Visual Basic for Applications, writing custom controls, multimedia, third-party VBX support, and V.B. programming books.

Windows Components A Forum (GO COMPA) Windows Components B Forum (GO COMPB)

These two forums house a variety of thirdparty vendors who produce productivity tools and reusable VBX components for Visual Basic programming. The Components B Forum is home to DPM Computer Solutions, publisher of the free monthly newsletter *Visual Basic Tips & Tricks*, which is read by thousands of V.B. users and downloadable from the publisher's library.

Windows Sources Forum (GO WINSOURCES)

This ZiffNet forum is the online companion to the Ziff magazine and features in its Library 2, "WinSources Utilities," the monthly Visual Basic programming projects suggested by columnist Paul Bonner.

Windows Users Group Network Forum (GO WINUSER)

WUGNET's forum is sponsored by an international organization for Windows professionals, and its Library 7, "System Development," has some Windows VBX packages and related development utilities

Ziff Cobb Group Programming Forum (GO COBBPR)

Another ZiffNet forum, this builds on the 12 print publications from the Cobb Group, the leading publisher of programming-language-specific journals. Sections cover programming in C/C++, BASIC, Pascal, and Paradox. Code listings and programming examples from each journal are downloadable from the libraries.

OTHER PROGRAMMING-RELATED VENDOR FORUMS

Basis International Forum (GO BASIS)

Blyth Forum (GO BLYTH)

Borland C++/DOS Forum (GO BCPPDOS)

Borland C++ for Windows/OS2 Forum (GO BCPPWIN)

Borland Delphi Forum (GO DELPHI)

CA Application Developers Forum (GO CAIDEV)

CA Clipper Forum (GO CLIPPER)

CA Visual Objects Forum (GO VOFORUM)

Cadence Forum (GO CADENCE)

CASE-DCI Forum (GO CASEFORUM)

Data Access Corp. Forum (GO DACCESS)

Deutsches CA-VO Forum (GO VOGER)

Digitalk Forum (GO DIGITALK)

Gupta Forum (GO GUPTAFORUM)

LOGO Forum (GO LOGOFORUM)

Macmillan Computer Publishing Forum (GO PHCP)

Micro Focus Forum (GO MICROFOCUS)

Microsoft Developer Relations Forum (GO MSDR)

Microsoft Languages Forum (GO MSLANG)

Microsoft Programming Apps Forum (GO PROGMSA)

Microsoft Win32 SDK Forum

(GO MSWIN32) NeXT Users Forum (GO NEXTFORUM)

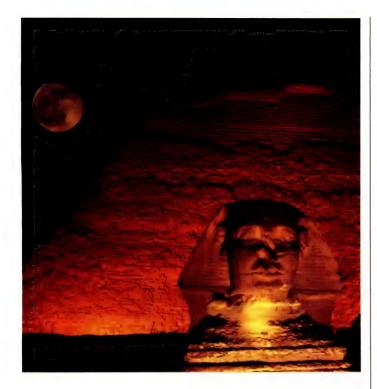
Novell Library Forum (GO NOVLIBRARY)

Oracle User Group Forum (GO ORAUSER)

Powersoft Forum (GO POWERSOFT)
UserLand Forum (GO USERLAND)

Additional programming vendors may be located within various multiple-vendor forums. To locate, use CompuServe's Support Directory (GO SUPPORT), searching on Product Category entry "Programming and Languages" and narrowing the search by Operating System.

-CJG



You could go to Egypt to uncover ventures that stand the test of time...

GO OLI for more information

tion and library with lots of source code."

Larry Waibel, author of the OS/2 shareware utility PMDMatch, says the forum offers essential user-to-user support. "More and more companies, IBM included, seem to be going away from hard-copy documentation, which makes it very difficult to just read something to learn it," he says. "Having access to others who've already hit many of the 'gotchas' is critical.'

Waibel, a self-proclaimed "nuts-and-bolts kind of guy," considers the CSet++ package an absolute must for OS/2 programming. He finds he learns programming best by seeing how others have done it in the forum. "Rick Fishman's [code] examples are just plain terrific for this. He specifically developed them for demonstrating how things work, and his liberal comments allow you to follow the code quite easily."

Indeed, the easy access to experienced programmers is the most appealing aspect of the forum for Bryan Walker, an "OS/2 Advisor" or volunteer recognized for consistent assistance to others. "When I started there was no information, no shops in Memphis even doing programming on the platform, and only one book, the very good OS-2 Presentation Manager Programming [ZD Press, 1993], by Charles Petzold," he says. Fortson also recommends Real-World Programming for OS/2 2.11 (SAMS, 1994) and OS/2 2.1 Workplace Shell Programming (Random House, 1994). "The example code and developers online not only helped me through tough spots but helped me avoid common mistakes."

Games People Author

The success of commercial and especially shareware PC games in the DOS and Windows world has led many aspiring programmers to take on a language in trying to be the author of the next Doom-size hit. And it may be the best way to learn programming: Aside from the project being more fun, says André Lamothe, author of Teach Yourself Game Programming in 21 Days (SAMS, 1994) and co-author of the best-selling Tricks of the Game Programming Gurus (SAMS, 1994), writing highly graphical programs accelerates the learning curve.

The new tide of interest led to the creation of the Game Developers Forum, which lets experienced and newbie game programmers mingle and trade tips on everything from getting high-quality artwork into one's game when you have little artistic talent to the practice of "prototyping," releasing an early unfinished version of a game to elicit feed-

back.

Darrel Porcher, a programmer for a U.S. television network who hopes to "create the next big game blockbuster," has conversed in the forum with Kevin Kline, of the Computer Game Developers Association, and author Lamothe. "He basically told me to stick to it, because it takes years to be really good at [programming]." Porcher also points game-making wannabes to a highly downloaded Windows Help file, the PC Game Programmers Encyclopedia. "It contains a wide array of information about PC architecture and game-programming techniques." (At press time, Benjamin Sawyer and other forum members were also building a frequently-asked-questions file for beginning game programmers. A shareware-specific FAQ is to follow.)

A longtime C-language applications programmer, Mark Farlow joined CompuServe to take advantage of the forum. "After reading every message and downloading more files than I can remember," he says, he decided to try his hand at a game he has always wanted to write, a role-playing adventure in the style of Origin's Ultima series. Farlow talked with forum members who advised him on tools he would need (Deluxe Paint! and POV Ray Caster among them), several techniques he could incorporate into his code, and optimizations. "I have even had people suggest books that I could use for further research, many of which have given me invaluable guidance," he adds.

David Green, a consumer-electronics technician whose programming hobby of the early 1980s has become his primary source of income, heads to the forum for troubleshooting suggestions and others' sample code, which, as with many programmers, keeps him from "reinventing

"A lot of people do this because they don't like their job. ... You may not become a millionaire, but at the very least you'll have job security. You can do it."



the wheel.""There is a lot of example code available there in Assembler, Pascal, and C aimed at virtually every facet of game programming," he says.

-Dave Mark

Most PC games today are written in C combined with sections of Assembler to make critical portions of the program such as a screen rendering run faster, he says, and "get away" with that practice because '486 and Pentium machines give the slower-running C code a performance boost. Because of the popularity of digitized audio and sound effects, motion video, and 3-D-rendered graphics, any new games programmer should learn multimedia, he says. Searching the Game Developers Forum and other online locales for good high-speed video and animation routines, input/output routines for keyboards and joysticks, and modular game-programming libraries for windows, sprites, and interfaces is a good idea. Keeping a collection of such files and newer technology saves time and can breed great games.

"The excellent pricing of high-powered paint programs, 3-D-rendering packages, digital-audio adapters, and sampling software, coupled with the tremendous horsepower available in your average '486 system, brings the capability of creating top-notch graphics and sound into the reach of the average programmer," says Green.

Something to Do

Perhaps the most important factor in learning software programming is having an idea. It's best to have a needed (or simply desired) application in mind when you start than to begin programming for programming's sake. "If the goal is only to learn to program, it's not as measurable a goal as being able to say, 'When this is done, I'll have a game for my kids,' "Kurata says.

But she cautions against trying for a desktop utility right off the bat—they're usually too complicated. "It's a lot easier to start with something that's more like data entry, where you put in some information and it's given back in some sort of meaningful or cute way," she says

Next to the mental capacity to logically think through an application's ordered steps and possibilities of error, the sheer will to become good at programming will likely guarantee success, says author Mark. "A lot of people do this because they don't like their job or they're unhappy with the direction their life is going. They decide, 'This is interesting to me and I'm going to take a step to change my life,' " he says. What's amazing to Mark is the high percentage of people who actually make it. If you learn how to program in C or C++, he says, you can find employment doing it (Visual Basic experience is becoming more valued as well). "You may not become a millionaire, but at the very least you'll have job security. You can do it."

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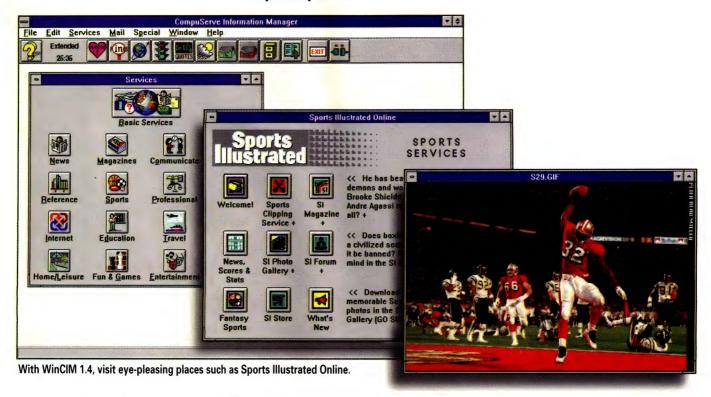
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by Harry Green



It's in the Bag: WinCIM 1.4 Included With This Issue

WinCIM—CompuServe's graphical user interface for Windows—just got another facelift. CompuServe Information Manager for Windows Version 1.4 looks and behaves much like its predecessor but offers new features that enhance members' interaction with the Information Service, including support for hypertext documents and improved Internet access. Many readers of *CompuServe Magazine* are receiving the English-language version of this software bundled with this issue; German, French, and Spanish versions will be released in the near future.

Members who use Version 1.4 are now able to navigate CompuServe via linked hypertext documents, making information retrieval much simpler and faster. As with the use of a

Mosaic browser on the World Wide Web, members can access related topics using hot links between cross-refer-

enced documents, images, forums, or service menus. CompuServe Hypertext documents are richly formatted with multiple fonts, colors, and graphical images, which can be saved to the WinCIM Filing Cabinet with all related hot links and graphics (by clicking on the File It button) or in simple ASCII text (by clicking File Save). These documents can also be saved in Microsoft's RTF format, which preserves fonts and layout information for importing to Microsoft Word and other applications.

Internet access is also enhanced with Version 1.4. Click on the new Internet icon on the main Browse menu and you'll be taken to a menu of CompuServe's growing Internet-related offerings, including File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Usenet Newsgroups, Compu-

Serve's Internet New Users and Resources forums, and more.

In addition, Version 1.4 supports the Windows Sockets (Winsock) interface, which gives members direct access to CompuServe using an existing Internet account. This feature is a boon for users who cannot access a local dialup number to CompuServe but do have access to the Internet. It's also handy for users who don't have a modem but do have a LAN connection to the Internet. Now members can connect to CompuServe using the Internet as the network and WinCIM 1.4 as the interface. Until Version 1.4, such access was limited to an ASCII interface.

Version 1.4 also allows easier graphical participation in the CompuServe Convention

Center. No longer do you need to know ASCII commands when participating in a conference—now simply click

your cursor on a question or vote button to make your thoughts known. The new software also supports greatly improved interactive-display performance during large conferences of 1,000 or more attendees. Questions and answers from the guest, moderator, and fellow participants scroll across the screen in an easy-to-follow format.

To provide better integration with other applications on your PC, WinCIM 1.4 supports the automatic launching of external Windows applications. Viewing an Adobe Acrobat file, for example, is now as simple as using the File Open command after a download. WinCIM 1.4 is smart enough to know which application it needs to open up the file. In addition, other applications can be run au-

tomatically upon request using the new Run command on the File menu.

For more information on WinCIM 1.4, visit the WinCIM Support Forum (GO WCIMSUP), where CompuServe Customer Service representatives answer questions. If you didn't receive WinCIM Version 1.4 with this magazine, be sure to download it from the WinCIM download area (GO WINCIM).

Harry Green is president of Netcom Inc. in Portland, Oregon. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,431.



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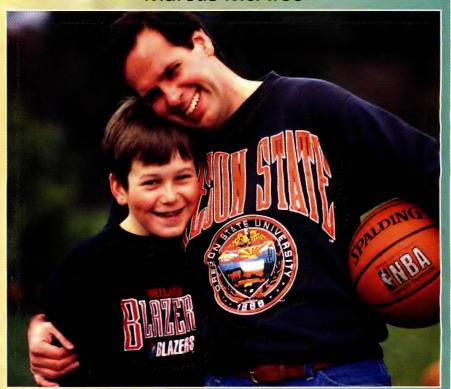
E*Trade Game

Executive News Service GO ENS

Investors Forum
GO INVFORUM

S&P Online GO S&P

Marcus McAfee



"My 10-year-old kid has been listening to Dad too much," says Jim McAfee. "Instead of wanting toys or CDs for Christmas, he wants some stocks."

Kids know the cost of everything and the value of nothing, right? Not if they learn market sense.

Ten-year-old Marcus McAfee of Portland, Oregon, has figured out a surefire way to stay up past his bedtime. Unlike his friends, who beg to watch another half-hour of TV, he appeals to his dad's soft spot: investing. "Marcus badgers me almost nightly to use the resources on CompuServe to search out good buys," says his father, Jim, a physician. His son's source of ideas for companies to consider: the products he sees around home. "He hits me up about 9:30 P.M. and says something like, I think this company would be good because they have a unique product of high quality, and their stock price should rise over time. Is their stock a good buy right now?" Then it's off to CompuServe we go."

Marcus and his dad download a Basic Company Snapshot, then check trends on the price/volume charts and VESTOR. For more detail, they call up Company Analyzer, Disclosure, or S&P Online. (See "Exercise Your Option," on p. 34, for descriptions of several investing products available through the Executive Service Option, now accessible to Standard Pricing Plan members.)

A decade ago, teaching a son or daughter about investing would have involved poring over columns of figures on the financial pages of the newspaper. Now CompuServe makes it easier and more compelling for young people—with or without help from parents and teachers—to learn how the stock market works and how to choose the best companies. After all, the medium is one most kids understand: the computer.

To help the market come alive for youngsters, some parents have them watch a particular stock. They choose a company that reflects their interest, discovering it the way the McAfees do, and then follow its progress in the market over the weeks. Some parents and teachers guide kids in hypothetical trading or simulated mutual funds. Others purchase a few shares of actual stock.

That's what Jim McAfee was considering last December when he posted a message in the Investors Forum. "My 10-year-old kid has been listening to Dad too much," he wrote. "Instead of wanting toys or CDs for Christmas, he wants some stocks." Jim ex-

Jane Easter Bahls is a freelance writer based in Columbus, Ohio, who specializes in business, law, and general-interest tonics

Jeffrey Hotop



HIGHEY

"I track over 70 different stocks, and just as soon as I start clicking on the keyboard there's a scuffle of little feet coming to peer over my shoulder," says father Steven Hotop.

plained he had already invested in mutual funds on his son's behalf, but Marcus wanted the stock certificates and the feeling of owning a company. Any suggestions?

Those who responded agreed that the best approach was to find a company making a product Marcus enjoys, whether baseball cards or athletic shoes. Several pointed out the companies with child-oriented stock programs, such as Marvel Entertainment, which prints its annual reports in comic-book form.

The McAfees chose to create a hypothetical \$25,000 portfolio for Marcus to manage, with guidance from Dad, and they actually bought a few shares of Walt Disney Co. "Each of my two children will have one of Disney's very handsome certificates issued to them to frame and hang on the wall," McAfee says. "This will be a lifelong reminder of the power and pride of investing in America's great companies."

Steven Hotop, a residential contractor in Perryville, Missouri, reports that his 12-year-old son, Jeffrey, a baseball-card collector, was thrilled when Dad bought him 100 shares of Topps stock. "He loved the idea and proudly boasts of the shares he now owns," Hotop says. "I get my stock quotes every market evening.

I track over 70 different stocks, and just as soon as I start clicking on the keyboard there's a scuffle of little feet coming to peer over my shoulder"

Kids who've gotten the hang of the market may want to test their ability to pick winners by playing CompuServe's simulated E^* Trade Game, in which players (mostly adults) compete with other members to see who can accumulate the most wealth in a month's time. Players buy and sell stocks in various companies at actual market price; the goal is to increase the value of a \$100,000 portfolio. The top 10 players are posted daily, and the winner for the month gets a \$50 prize from E^* Trade.

A recent winner was 13-year-old Uri Miller, with a final portfolio value of \$256,000. "It's fun to watch stocks fluctuate," says Uri, an eighth-grader at Yavneh Academy in Paramus, New Jersey. "I like to see how I perform."

His stellar investing career started when he was 11 and asked his father, Leon, how to read the stock tables. "He taught me and I followed a few stocks for a couple of months, and they did very well," Uri says. "I thought, Why not pick a couple more stocks, read a couple more things, and get more involved?" A year later they joined CompuServe and Uri started playing the E*Trade Game regularly.

At school, Uri joined a team that competes in the New Jersey Stock Market Game, a nationwide competition sponsored by the New Jersey Council on Economic Education and the Trenton State College Center for

Uri Miller



ROBERT GIL

"It's fun to watch stocks fluctuate," says Miller, a 13-year-old eighth-grader and recent E*Trade stock-portfolio game winner. "I like to see how I perform."

Economic Education. Last year his team placed fourth out of 250 teams in the district and 13th in the region.

"CompuServe is the most essential part of my research," Uri says. He accesses Dow Jones and Reuters news, and stock-market quotes daily. He frequents the Investors Forum, finding out what members are investing in and why. "I do not use the information from the Investors Forum in my games," Uri declares. "I like to try to outperform the market myself."

Investors Forum members from all over ask Uri investing questions, his proud father reports, noting that some take his investment advice. "They buy stocks and make money—then they're astounded to learn he's only 13."

A Class Act

Jeffery Kingston, a high-school teacher in Atascadero, California, recently designed a mutual-fund simulation around CompuServe for use in the classroom. Because many of the students at West Mall Alternative School are unable to attend classes because of isolation, disability, or health problems, CompuServe is their chief link to their teacher, fellow students, and the information they need to learn.

Jeffery Kingston



PATRICK SWADENER

PERSONAL

ENTERPRISE

His high-school
students participate in
a mutual-fund simulation.
They begin with a set
amount of money, then
research companies
online.

Kingston designs learning modules that his computer-equipped students can work on together from their homes.

In the simulation, students each begin with a specified amount of money, then research companies online and choose 10 com-

panies for a fund. This year one student is focusing on sports, one on snack food, and one on telecommunications in Third

World countries. Then they track the stocks to see how their funds do. "We're pushing a lot of math," Kingston says. "They have to chart every day. The money and the stock certificates aren't real, but everything else is." Students obtain Company Snapshots, check Business News, and track stocks using Basic Quotes.

"The mutual-fund simulation was very interesting, and I learned more than I thought I was going to," says Josh Motherwell, a 17-year-old senior in Kingston's class. Josh chose computers and technology for his theme. "The stocks I chose did very well because the computer industry is thriving."

Why teach high schoolers about the stock market? "We teach a lot of things in school, but a lot don't seem practical to me," Kingston says. "When we're done with this, they'll have learned how big business operates in America."

Older students can do the same. Nancy DuFresne, who graduated from Emory University in December, turned to CompuServe last semester when her economics professor assigned a portfolio exercise. Working in pairs or trios, the students were to assemble two portfolios starting at \$100,000 each and keep track of how they'd do for a month. They were to use a trading strategy on one and a buy-and-hold strategy for the other.

"I jumped on CompuServe to get some in-

formation from other people on what stocks were hot and what strategy to use," says DuFresne, now a software

developer in Atlanta, Georgia. She conversed with trading buffs in the Investors Forum, combed the Executive News Service for articles on biotech stocks, and downloaded daily **Nancy DuFresne**



OHN DICKERSON

"I jumped on
CompuServe to get
some information from
other people on what
stocks were hot and
what [investing] strategy
to use," says DuFresne.

quotes. The market was down; most of the class lost nearly 30 percent of their portfolios. But DuFresne's online research turned up news that her classmates had missed: CIBA Biotech, a Swiss company, was about to purchase Chiron Corp. for more than market value, which dramatically boosted Chiron's stock. "The result," she says, "was a 27 percent gain in a bad market."

DuFresne wishes she'd learned about investing at an earlier age. Many in the next generation of students are doing just that, thanks to dedicated parents and teachers and the convenience of CompuServe.

Are You Game? Play the Market With E*Trade

Members can play two stock-market games online using current market data. E*Trade Securities Inc. conducts the games—one for stocks only and another for stocks and/or stock options—in which members compete against one another to see who can accumulate the most wealth in one month's time.

When you sign up for either game in the E*Trade Stock Market Game area, a portfolio is created for you with \$100,000 of "game money." You may trade as frequently as you want and can check your position against the top 10 players daily.

For a complete list of rules, GO ETGAME and select Game Instructions.

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ust don't have the time for power problems on your PC? Don't worry. They'll always make the time for you. It's not if a power problem will occur, but when. Due to household appliances, poor wiring, bad weather or even other office equipment, power problems are as inevitable as death and taxes.

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0

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hit your computer, standard surge suppressors are literally powerless to protect you. And a study in a recent *PCWeek* showed that the largest single

cause of data loss is bad power, accounting for almost as much data loss as all other causes combined.

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Valentin Gonzalez, Pfizer

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"We were working on a state bid when the power went off. APC saved the day and year and future...about 800 pages of data saved thanks to APC." Ravi Iyer, Software Galleria

"A power surge did significant damage to all of our systems except those protected by APC. The APC units were undamaged..." C. Jeffrey, C. Jeffrey Eng.

"APC has virtually eliminated downtime in our corporate network..." Kurt Roemer, Searle Corp.

"Power went out while processing payroll! If not for APC we would have had a walkout!" Suzi Higgason, OSI Inc



Home office user Don Traux knows first band about APC reliability: "It ought to be against the law to buy a computer without an APC Back-UPS 250. I recently had a direct lightning bit right outside the house...my computer never blinked."

"APC lets me sleep better at night. How much would you pay to get back that one file you worked all day to complete for the boss who gets on the plane at 8:00 a.m? You should assume that you'll buy a UPS, not that it's some luxury item." R. Morella, Westinghouse

"A power surge wiped out the FAT tables on all PC's not protected by APC. Now have APC installed on all.." Craig Post, Comm. Tech.

"Before I purchased the UPS I had to put in at least two hard drives at \$1000. With APC products...no new hard drives in two years!" S. Foreman, LSP



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Exercise Your Option

Yes! The Executive Service Option's products are opened to everyone.

The CompuServe Executive Service Option recently opened its doors to Standard Pricing Plan members, giving them automatic access to once exclusive news and financial products. That means Standard Plan members can now create personal folders in the Executive News Service to clip articles from

the Associated Press, Dow Jones, PR Newswire, Reuters, United Press International, The Washington Post, and

other international news wires. They can also research detailed reports on publicly traded U.S. companies, access documents filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, and calculate annualized returns on investments with information from Executive Service Option financial services. In addition, they save 25 percent when retrieving historical stock quotes—the cost per historical quote is 3 cents through the Executive Service Option.

NEWS RESOURCES

ENTERPRISE

Executive News Service (GO ENS)

The Executive News Service provides members access to many of the world's leading news providers. It is structured with public and personal folders. When you access ENS using WinCIM or DOSCIM, these folders appear on the screen. When you access ENS using MacCIM, you must click on the Review

Clipping Folder icon to view the public and personal fold-

Two public folders always appear: Current News and News by Company Ticker. Inside the Current News folder is a list of wire services and the articles that have come across each wire in the last 24 hours. These articles can be read in full text, previewed by the first few lines, scanned by headlines, or filed for later reading. The News by Company Ticker folder prompts for a ticker symbol to search the wire services for articles on a specific company. Occasionally, Compu-Serve will provide other public folders to monitor news of a major event.

Personal folders give CompuServers the ability to customize the news to their interests. Standard Pricing Plan members have the ability to create up to three personal folders to "clip" and store articles on topics of their choice. (For instructions on setting up a clipping folder, see "Make Your Own ENS Folder," on p. 36.)

With access to basic services, Standard Pricing Plan members have always been able to read daily news feeds from several of the news wires listed below without paying connect-time charges. However, the basic-services offerings cannot be searched by keyword or ticker symbol, and do not have the clipping capabilities that allow articles to be sorted and stored in personal clipping folders. GO NEWS for more information.

Now, Standard Pricing Plan members can collect stories from the following ENS news wires.

Surcharge: \$15/hour or 25 cents/minute.

AP France contains local French and international news in the French language, including national, economic, social, sports, and cultural news and information.

Associated Press provides U.S. and world news, including business, finance, politics, and science.

Australian Associated Press offers local Australian news and information, including current events, business, weather, and sports.

Deutsche Presse-Agentur supplies news of German current events, lifestyles, politics, sports, culture, and more in the German language.

Dow Jones provides continually updated business and financial news.

PA News offers comprehensive news from the United Kingdom's leading news agency, as well as in-depth U.K. general, financial, sports, parliamentary, and royal news.

PR Newswire contains stories from this worldwide distributor of corporate news to the media and financial communities.

Reuters provides world, North American, European Community, sports, financial, and Reuters/Variety Entertainment news from this global news agency.

The Washington Post offers a variety of national and international news, government and political coverage, metropolitan Washington, D.C., stories, and feature/style-section items.

United Press International provides articles covering news of interest to six U.S. regions, as well as national, international, financial, and sports news.

US Company NewsAlert provides comprehensive business and corporate news.



INVESTING RESOURCES

Company Analyzer (GO ANALYZER) provides one-stop shopping for obtaining various financial information on companies. It searches several of the databases listed below and offers detailed reports on 11,000 publicly traded U.S. companies, including company profile, stock-price history, president's letter, annual-report footnotes, earnings/growth forecasts, and more.

Enter your search criteria and the Analyzer lists the reports available for the company you have chosen.

Search by company name, ticker symbol, or CUSIP number.

Surcharge: Once you've accessed Company Analyzer, click on the Surcharge button for a detailed cost breakdown.

Company Screening (GO COSCREEN) allows you to search the entire Disclosure database of more than 11,000 companies with selected criteria (see search list below) to produce a list of companies that meet that criteria. This service is popular with salespeople who use it to generate leads, as well as with investors.

Search by a variety of growth rates and fi-

nancial ratios along with SIC codes, state, total assets, book value, market value, annual sales, net income, cash flow, latest price, and more.

Surcharge: \$15/hour.

Disclosure II (GO DISCLOSURE) includes information on publicly traded companies based on documents filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Reports contain names, holdings, recent transactions of the principal insiders, and 5 percent (or more) owners for 11,000 publicly traded U.S. companies. Subsidiary information and business-segment data are also provided.

Search by ticker symbol or CUSIP number or by entering an asterisk followed by the first few letters of a company's name.

Surcharge: Once you've accessed Disclosure, select the Surcharge menu option for a list of prices per report.

Institutional Brokers Estimate System (GO IBES) provides consensus-earnings forecasts on more than 3,400 publicly traded U.S. companies by more than 2,400 research analysts at 130 brokerage and research firms.

IBES displays a company's actual earningsper-share figure and price/earnings ratio most recently recorded; mean, median, high, and low estimates for future period earnings; and the number of estimates raised and lowered, as well as their overall variability. Projections are provided for the rest of the current year, the following year, and for long-term growth.

Search by ticker symbol or CUSIP number

Surcharge: Summary Earnings Discussion, 50 cents/company, and Detailed Earnings Report, \$2/company.

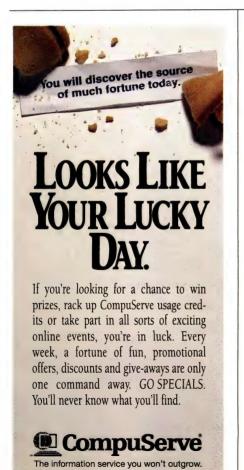
Return Analysis (GO RETURN) calculates the annualized returns for your securities; useful for analyzing historical performance of specific issues, such as mutual funds, in bull and bear markets.

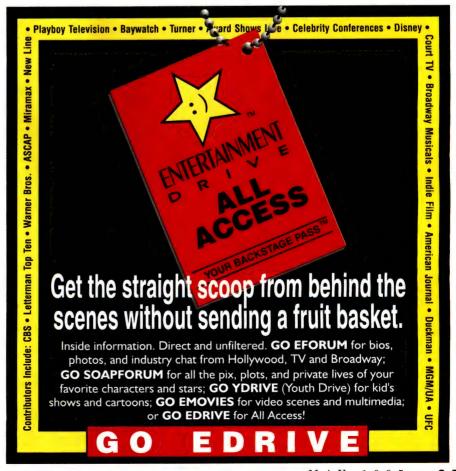
Search by entering the date range or number of days over which you want change and return calculated.

Surcharge: 50 cents/report plus 15 cents for each return calculated.

Cary Roberts is an assistant editor of CompuServe Magazine. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70004,2650.

See "Make Your Own ENS Folder," page 36.





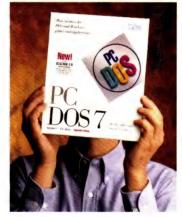
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Make Your Own ENS Folder

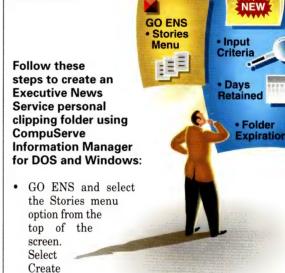
If you want news tailored to your interests, set up a personal clipping folder in the Executive News Service (GO ENS). You can select up to seven search terms for each folder, and it's important that you

NEW FOLDER

PRESS F1

GLASGOW & ASSOCIATES

choose the words or phrases carefully. If they are too narrow, you'll miss important news; broad, and you'll be inundated with irrelevant material.



A Create Folder box will be displayed.

Folder.

In that box, fill in the name you want to give the folder, number of days that stories should be retained (up to 14), folder's expiration date (no longer than one year), news wires you want the folders to "clip" from, and folder search criteria.

At any time, you can select the Help option or press the F1 key to receive helpful instructions, including examples of valid search criteria.

Follow these steps when using CompuServe Information Manager for Macintosh:

- GO ENS and click on the Maintain Folders icon. A box titled Personal Folders will appear. Click on the Add button.
- An Add a New Folder box will be displayed. Follow the instructions listed for the Create Folder box above.
- At any time, you can click on the question-mark icon at the top right-hand corner of the box to receive help.

When using an ASCII or terminal-emulation program:

- Type GO ENS and select Option 4, Create/Change/Delete a Personal Folder, from the ENS main menu.
- Then choose Option 1. Create a Personal Folder.
- Answer the subsequent questions, including the name you want to give the folder, its expiration date (no longer than one year), the number of days that stories should be retained in the folder (up to 14), and the news wires you want included. There is no limit to the number of wires you can have monitored. Finally, you'll be asked to enter up to seven keywords.

For more information on creating an ENS folder, see the online instructions in the Executive News Service or read the file ENS.DOC in Library 1, "Help Library," of the CompuServe Help Forum (GO HELP-FORUM).





RANDOM ACCESS

Where to GO

Entertainment Drive GO EDRIVE

Youth Drive! Forum GO YDRIVE!

Club Kid

Welcome to Youth Drive! Forum, a cyber space where teens rule and pimples don't really matter.

There aren't many places teens can call their own online. Sure, they're welcome in any forum; one of the benefits of communicating online is that age and other barriers to social interaction disappear. But, as in the offline world, teens do want places to hang out—to chat with others their own age with whom they can relate and share experiences.

Spun off from its own section in the Entertainment Drive (or EDRIVE) Forum, the Youth Drive! (or YDRIVE!) Forum is just that online hangout, a cyberspace mall/food court, where teens can discuss not only the fun stuff—all forms of entertainment—but also the social issues important to them.

Considered a forum designed by youth, for youth, YDRIVE! is staffed with young sysops ranging from 11 to 16 years old, including John Presley, 13, a keyboard player at his family's country-music theater in Branson, Missouri; Cameron Stark, 16, a junior at Judge Memorial High School in Salt Lake City, Utah; Evin Sayin, an eighth-grade student who logs on from Honolulu; and Adam White, 11, from Grand Rapids, Michigan, whose mom, Rilla Moulden, is one of the forum's adult sysops and was instrumental in creating the forum. The adults maintain a low profile, however, preferring to train the stu-

Holly G. Miller is an adjunct professor of communications at Indiana's Anderson University, travel editor of The Saturday Evening Post, and author of 12 books. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,2345.

dent staff to manage files, oversee the message board, and host conferences. "We guide the kida, we don't rule them," she says,

Moulden, whose professional background includes 13 years as a classrum teacher and experience as a developer dcommunity programs for kids, wanted b create a youthdriven forum that blended education with en tertainment. She sought the guidance of Entertainment Drive executive produces Michael Bolanos, who once collaborated with actor Ben Vereen on a teen version of a TV talk show. The two pooled ideas and polled the "experts" by conducting an online youth survey in EDRIVE.

"Kids were brought into the planning process from the beginning," says Bolanos. We asked what they wanted. They said they're interested in the same things as adults, only in kid versions. They want to know more about movies, television shows, books, music, and concerts, and to read reviews written by other kids.

Forum members discuss those topics plus sports, computers, art and theater, and cartoons in the message sections; kid-composed movie and book reviews are available in the forum libraries, as are movie press releases and biographies and GIFs of music, TV, and movie personalities. The forum hosts special movie promotions, too. To celebrate the February release of Mr. Payback, billed as Hollywood's first interactive movie, YDRIVE! members had the chance to win passes to a prerelease screening of the film in a number of selected cities in the U.S. In addition to a weekly online teen conference, the forum hosts special guest conferences, such as one held recently with Chris Crosby, co-publisher of Super Crew Comics.

Library 8, "Refrigerator Door," lets kids show off their creativity, whether it's poems or stories they've written or graphics and sound files they've created. Fourteen-year-old aspiring novelist John L. Reid of Cassville, Maryland, uploaded three of his short stories to the library, seeking ways to improve them; Lawrenceville, New Jersey's Jenna Casper posted her story "Steven and Me" just to share her feelings about what it's like to have a crush on someone.

Photos of the YDRIVE! staff and forum members are the attraction in Library 18, "The Photo Gallery," where members are encouraged to upload photos of themselves or their families. Even members who don't have a scanner can be included by sending photos to Moulden, who will scan and upload them to the library.

But forum members say their favorite thing about YDRIVE! is just meeting other people via live "chats." "I mostly enjoy talking to people directly in conference," says Presley. "The idea that I could talk with someone on the other side of the world—it drives me nuts how great it is!" Moulden thinks the freedom of the online world is great for teenagers. "It's a great leveler. It gets rid of all the things that

keep people from communication ACTO ATO no zite onli Members drop in from all over the don important peop import including Stefan Tryggvason, of Norwich, United Kingdom, who thinks live conference ung is "generally a good laugh," and Annie here Otan leens of inding. Instead, and found so is he once also important ing thelp we being a parse going on mever mee says he was supportive there, about some one of the leens of the l Sievers, who logged on from the top of the world," in Barrow, Alaska, to search for a pen pal and to share her excitement at seeing the first sunrise after a long, dark winter. The forum also tries to provide an atmopl. re where teens can gain confidence. "We ver mee was ays he was amazed tryEven though about someone they had try build self-esteem," says Presley. "We 2 inment topics are hot Now you can purchase Microsoft Press® books from anywhere in the world-just GO MSP! ■ The WYSIWYG Guides—Full color beginner's guides to using computers and software. Step by Step Series—Complete do-it-yourself software training with interactive lessons on disk. ■ Field Guides—Handy, easy-to-use guides for quick answers about computers and software anywhere, anytime. The Running Series—Comprehensive software

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chance to talk about the this wide-ranging chance to talk about the pregion of the pregio

Moulden also invites parents to drop in to talk about the kinds of entertainment their kids consume and the issues surrounding entertainment, such as violence on TV and in video games, and ways to use TV effectively for education. She sees Section 17 as a place where parents can empower themselves to

change children's entertainment. "Instead of boycotting or being disgusted with something like the Power Rangers yet not knowing what to do about it, parents can discuss these issues here and get the industry's attention," she

one industry professional who is listening is Lori Cook, children's-services director at television station WXMI FOX

17 in western Michigan and executive producer of a weekly teen show called Fast Forward that airs on two Fox TV affiliates in Michigan. She says YDRIVE! puts her in touch with her target market and removes traditional barriers to communication. "I hang out with the kids, talk with them, and listen to them," says Cook, who also writes a weekly children's column in The Grand Rapids Press. While preparing to launch a sixweek Tobacco-Free Kids campaign with the American Lung Association, Cook checked out YDRIVE! to get advice on how to create public-service announcements that would get kids' attention. Her question "Why do kids smoke when they know it could harm them?" generated more than 20 insightful responses, and she used the feedback to create effective TV spots.

Cook's participation in YDRIVE! has resulted in a collaboration between Adam

White's sixth-grade class and The Grand Rapids Press, Cook's station WXMI, and a group of movie theaters in western Michigan.

Calling themselves the C.O.O.L.

(COmmunicating On Line) Zone, the kids write a weekly column in The Grand Rapids

Press, accompany Cook when the does interviews for Fast Forward, and attend prerelease screenings of G- and PG-

rated movies. The C.O.O.L. critics write movie reviews, post them in the forum, and turn them in as schoolwork. Moulden says the partnership is a way to teach the kids communications skills such as how to write critically. Also, children's-book publishers such as Free Spirit Press, HyperionBooks for Children, and Disney Press will soon provide books that the C.O.O.L. Zone kids will review and post in the forum's libraries.

By communicating online, young people can develop skills that will prepare them for greater social interaction as they grow up, says Moulden. "[At this age] maybe they haven't quite learned how to sort out their thoughts. Once they do, they change from using the message board just as a way to meet other kids to a place to work out their ideas and philosophies of life. It's a progression of sophistication."

See "Uploads for the Y Generation," page 42.

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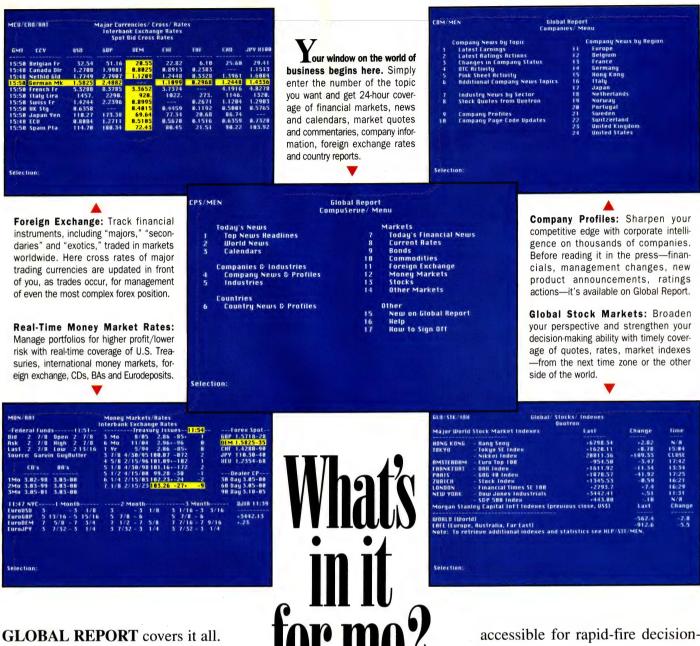
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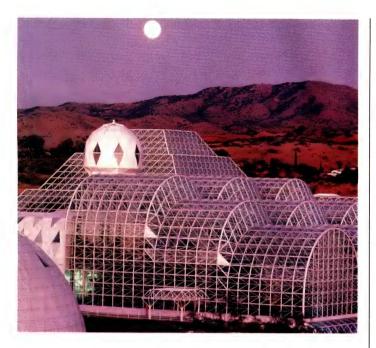
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Uploads for the Y Generation

Here's a sample of some of the files offered in the Youth Drive! Forum (GO YDRIVE!):

Library 1, "YDRIVE! Help & News"

Printing GIFs—Short description of how to print GIF images. GIFPRT.TXT (776 bytes).

Movie Reviews—Suggestions on how to write movie reviews you can contribute to YDRIVE! MOVRVW.TXT (1,242 bytes).

Online Tips—Helpful hints on how kids can make the best of their online time. KIDTIP.TXT (5,846 bytes).

Library 3, "The Box/Television"

Party of Five—GIF image of the cast from the popular Fox TV show. POF01.GIF (45,609 bytes).

Beverly Hills 90210—Cast shot from the Fox TV show. 90210.GIF (264,679 bytes).



90210 GI

Library 5, "Movies & Videos"

Jungle Book—Movie review of this Disney movie by forum member Mandy Farrell. JUNGLE.RVW (3,489 bytes).

Yellow Dog—Movie review of *Far From Home: The Adventures of Yellow Dog* by forum members. YELLOW.RVW (2,074 bytes).

Mr. Payback—GIF image of Billy Warlock in Hollywood's first interactive movie, *Mr. Payback*. PAYBK4.GIF (272,771 bytes).

Library 8, "Refrigerator Door"

Fiction—Forum member John L. Reid's futuristic story of an escaped prisoner of war and the forces pursuing him. ESCMOD.TXT (3,654 bytes).

Short Story—"Steven and Me," a story written by forum member Jenna Casper about a teenage crush. RSSJMC.TXT (6,420 bytes).

Snowman—A 3-D-rendered snowman, created in 3D Studio by the artist, forum member Jonathan Guberman. SNOMAN.GIF (26,621 bytes).

Gumball Machine—Ray-traced image of a gumball machine created by Jonathan Guberman. GUMBA1.GIF (33,259 bytes).

Library 9, "Fan's Clubhouse"

Popular-Music Fan Clubs—
Listing of fan clubs for such artists as Green Day, Pearl Jam, and more. FANCLU.TXT (1,366 bytes).

Library 10, "Music & Bands"

REM Bio—Background information about the latest REM record-

GUMBA1.GIF

ing, "Monster." REM.TXT (11,733 bytes).

Green Day Photo—GIF image of pop/punk band Green Day at the 1994 Lollapalooza festival. GRNDAY.GIF (156,519 bytes).

Library 13, "Programs: General"

Screen Saver—A Windows 3.1 screen-saver module depicting a dinosaur leaping onscreen and ripping the background with its claws. Complete with sound effects. File requires PKUnZip to decompress. DINO.ZIP (90,696 bytes).

Library 14, "Sports & Hobbies"

Skateboarding Top 10—Tips to keep you skateboarding in one piece from Radical Rex, the skateboarding "dinostar" of Activision's adventure game, and World Cup Skateboarding. SKATE.TXT (2,005 bytes).

SmartTracker Stamps—A Windows program that tracks and catalogs stamp collections. TKSTMP.ZIP (407,218 bytes).

Library 15, "In Print"

Fanzines—Frequently asked questions about such fanzines as *FactSheet 5.* F5FAQ.TXT (11,933 bytes).

Electronic Books—This program lets you compile your novel, poem, short story, or review into electronic-book form for distribution or uploading. ETEXT1.ZIP (200,606 bytes).

Comic Books—News about new titles from Super Crew Comics: "Wacky Comics for a Wacky America" in April '95. SCCAPR.TXT (2.998 bytes).

Library 16, "YDRIVE! Multimedia"

Richie Rich—QuickTime movie showing Richie meeting his personal trainer Claudia Schiffer from the movie of the same name. Flattened for use on Mac or PC. To view this file in Windows, GO VIEWER to download the EDRIVE Movie Viewer. RICH2.SIT (3,689,984 bytes).

Dumb and Dumber—Jim Carrey shows off his karate skills in this movie scene. Flattened QuickTime movie for Mac or PC. DUMB3.SIT (3,152,896 bytes).

Unstuff—You need this program to unstuff any QuickTime movie. Converts SIT files to MOV format so your Movie Viewer can read and play the movie. UNSITI.EXE (134,640 bytes).

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Maps of the World (above, lower right) and Basic Maps (upper right) bring the globe to your fingertips.

Top of the Charts

MAGELLAN's maps get you to the Arctic or simply downtown.

Computer technician Rich Mulrain of Greensboro, North Carolina, often makes repair calls for his company, Preferred Data Corp., to unfamiliar cities across the state. Thinking the roads seem to change daily in North Carolina, Mulrain wanted a detailed, up-to-date road map to help him find client sites. He found just what he needed in MA-GELLAN Geographix, a new CompuServe service. Using Macromedia Freehand 3.1, a graphics program for desktop publishing, he is able to add anything he wants to a downloaded map of North Carolina-be it roads in out-of-the-way towns, train routes, or political boundaries. "I can keep the map updated all the time," says Mulrain.

MAGELLAN Geographix offers three types of cartographically exact maps: MAGELLAN Basic Maps, Maps of the World, and the MGDigital Atlas. The maps vary in detail and cost to members.

MAGELLAN Basic Maps, part of basic services, outline each of the seven continents and also offer a special monthly map that includes the North Pole and political hot spots such as Chechnya. Basic Maps are presented as colorful, information-rich GIF images. To retrieve a Basic Map using CompuServe Information Manager, type GO MAGELLAN. Select Option 2, MAGELLAN Basic Maps, and then choose the continent or specialty map you

want to view or download.

Maps of the World, which is part of extended services but carries no special surcharges, offers more than 600 GIF maps that include the continents, major world regions, countries, and cities. Each map contains a wealth of information.

To view or download one of these maps using CIM, type GO MAGELLAN, select Option 3, Maps of the World, and then choose Option 3, Access Maps of the World, from the next menu. Read the license agreement, select Proceed, and then choose the appropriate region for the map you desire. Enter "list" to see a listing of all the maps for the area you select. Next, select the map title you want from the list. You can view or download any of these GIF images of Maps of the World for the standard CompuServe connect-time charge of \$4.80 an hour for modem speeds up to and including 14,400 bps.

The GIF format of the MAGELLAN Basic

Maps and Maps of the World is essentially a grid of picture cells that make up the image. GIF allows the creation of small map files that can be quickly downloaded; however, less detail can be included because the resolution is limited. For instance, map details labeled in small type would be difficult to read in a GIF map file, so only a few such details can be included. Consequently, maps created in the GIF format have only a few "layers" of geographic information. They





are compressed to a single layer for better onscreen viewing.

If you want more detail, MGDigital Atlas Freehand vector maps in Windows or Macintosh format provide it. Instead of GIF picture cells, these maps are illustrated with lines and polygons, so much more information at high resolution can be included on the map. MGDigital Atlas maps are built in 15 to 50 layers of information, including a latitude and longitude grid, primary cities, secondary cities, primary roads, lakes, rivers, political and administrative boundaries, country names, neighboring countries, and more.

To retrieve a map from MGDigital Atlas using CIM, type GO MAGELLAN and select Option 4, MGDigital Atlas, and then choose Option 1, About MGDigital Atlas, from the next menu to read more about this service. Next, choose Option 3, Access MGDigital Atlas, read the license, and select Proceed. Choose PC or Mac, depending on the type of computer you are using. Pick the appropriate region for your map and enter "list" to see a complete listing of all the maps for the area you have selected. Select the map title you want. (At this point, all the maps available under this choice will be presented.)

Once you navigate the menus to the country or state level, you will be presented with the price of the map file in U.S. dollars. The final screen displays an abstract describing the







Before and after: an MGDigital Atlas map of Cork, Ireland, colorized using Freehand software.

map, the price, and the method of billing. To exit without ordering, just close the window or file. To download, select Mark or Retrieve. Note: the menu options in MGDigital Atlas do not include a View option, since Freehand files are not supported for online viewing.

Each editable MGDigital Atlas map carries a per-unit charge that ranges from \$50 to \$400, depending on the map's complexity. (The average price is about \$100.) A directory listing all the MGDigital Atlas map titles and their prices is in the file MGDADR.TXT in Library 1, "General Information," of the MAGELLAN Maps Forum. In addition to offering an expert source for answering your questions

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about viewing, downloading, and editing MAGELLAN maps from the cartographers, graphic artists, and sourcing specialists who helped create the maps, the forum offers CompuServe members worldwide a place to discuss geography.

Once an MGDigital map has been downloaded, Freehand software can be used to create hundreds of additional maps in just minutes, manipulating the original map's layers to fit your needs—whether it's adding North Carolina country roads, changing the street names from English to Japanese, or altering the map's colors. Details can be added, deleted, or changed by combining layers of information from a layer menu or by creating new layers. (If you're interested in using Adobe Illustrator, CorelDRAW, or other illustration programs, MAGELLAN Geographix can provide you with compatible maps for a



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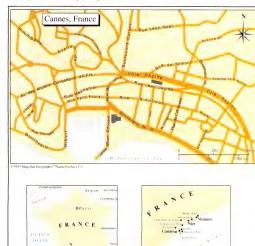
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Retrieving maps electronically offers numerous benefits over more traditional methods, such as photocopying or scanning. Most important, the maps are current; as boundaries change, so do the MAGELLAN Geographix maps. Using CIM, maps can be viewed online before downloading, and the downloaded image is of the highest quality and clarity. Members receive a license for each map, so no copyright laws are violated.



Three MGDigital Atlas views of Cannes, France.

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MAGELLAN Geographix maps are used for myriad applications. Teachers and students use them for class instruction and reports; businesspeople find them valuable for presentations, brochures, and newsletters. Magazines such as Newsweek as well as newswire services such as the Associated Press Broadcast Graphics rely on them for quickly getting accurate depictions of world trouble spots. Even the maps in Broderbund's children's game Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego? Junior Detective version are from MAGELLAN Geographix.

"Now CompuServe members have desktop access to the entire world," says Doug president of MAGELLAN Crawford. Geographix.

Cathryn Conroy is a senior writer of CompuServe Magazine. Her CompuServe User ID number is 70007,417.

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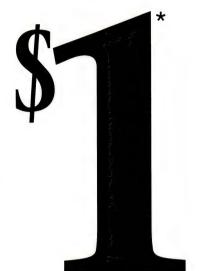
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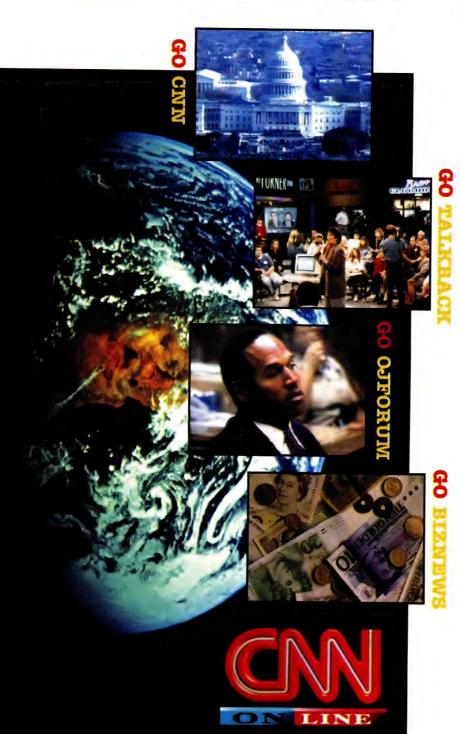
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WILD WILD WEB BROWSERS—Want to try CompuServe's new direct link to the Internet via the dial PPP (Point-to-Point Protocol) connection, particularly to explore the diverse fun of the World Wide Web? Browser programs for the Web and other helpful files are available in the Internet Resources Forum (GO INETRESOURCE).

Library 4, "PC Internet S/W"

Trumpet Winsock—A TCP/IP protocol handler, necessary for making a PPP connection to the Internet. Required when using NCSA Mosaic, Netscape, Cello, and other Windows 3.x PC-compatible Web browsers.

TWS20B.ZIP (179,015 bytes)

NCSA Mosaic for Windows—A widely used freeware Web browser from the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, Mosaic is the award-winning GUI prototype for many of the commercially available browsers.

WMOSA9.EXE (947,877 bytes)

Cello for Windows—Developed at Cornell Law School, this freeware browser is known for its ease of use and speed in processing the HTML documents found on graphics-intensive Web sites.

CELLO.ZIP (328,429 bytes) W

WinWeb for Windows—ElNet's strippeddown browser is known for its creator's comprehensive home page, providing varied links to and powerful searching of Web pages.

WINWEB.ZIP (596,336 bytes) W

Key to Mentioned Files Animation OS/2 DDOS Text Graphics Windows Macintosh

Library 5, "Mac Internet S/W"

Mosaic for Macintosh—The Mac version of NCSA's popular browser. Requires Apple's MacTCP (included in System 7.5) protocol handler for PPP connection. A version for Power Macs is available separately in this library as MMOS17.PPC.

MMOS17.68K (1,067,520 bytes) M



Library 9, "WWW,Hypertext Tools"

Getting Netscape (above)—This file contains instructions for using CompuServe's FTP service to retrieve Netscape Communications Corp.'s Navigator 1.0N (Windows and Mac versions), top-rated by PC Magazine for its "robust and remarkably faster" interface.

NETSCP.TXT (380 bytes)

Web FAQ—An Internet frequently-askedquestions text file that explains what the World Wide Web is all about.

WWWFAQ.TXT (79,757 bytes)

SKETCHY INFORMATION—One library in the Comics/Animation Forum (GO COMICS) is a kind of virtual gallery where the work of real comic-book artists and comics aficionados share space. Here are a few GIF and JPEG images we and forum downloaders like.

Library 14, "Comic Art GIF Files"

Amazing Ray-Trace—This 3-D computer model of superhero Spiderman, "imagineered" by Greg Tsadilas, has him in a crouch shooting his enemy-trapping web.

SPIDY2.GIF (69,282 bytes) [6]

Manga Face—An example of the Japanese manga drawing style, this close-up of the face of Battle Angel Alita shows her lost in competitive concentration

ALITAF.GIF (17,940 bytes) [6]



Space-Based Shots (above)—Chip Marler's two handsome ray-traced images show a rocket zooming through a valley of molten lava on Venus, and the Silver Surfer soaring through space on his board, from a 1994 issue of Wizard magazine.

VENUS.JPG (85,301 bytes) 50 SURFER.JPG (61,952 bytes)

Out for Blood—The piercing red eyes and skimpy attire of Vampirella, from the Harris Publications comic series Vengeance of Vampirella.

VAMPI.GIF (18,965 bytes) [6]

Marvel-ous Look—Marvel Entertainment's Wolverine battles Sabretooth in this color image penned electronically by Rus Wooten.

WOLV2.GIF (59.865 bytes) [6]

DISHING OUT INFO—Interested in the highly advertised Direct Broadcast Satellite television services that use easily installable 18-inch dishes? One library in the Consumer Electronics Video Forum (GO CEVIDEO) has many files full of important illumination.

Library 7, "DBS/DSS Satellite"

DBS Questions—An exhaustive Internet FAQ file answering commonly asked questions about DBS, including equipment, costs, programming, and how you'll figure out what to watch with channels numbering to 999.

DBS.FAQ (49,172 bytes)

Q&A From Members—The transcript of a well-attended 1994 forum conference with representatives from DirecTV and USSB, two of the major U.S. providers of DSB.

DSSCON.TXT (15,752 bytes)

Channel Hopping—This small DOS program displays channel lists for DirecTV and USSB, and will print lists out alphabetically by network or numerically by channel number.

DSS.ZIP (29,836 bytes)

Line of Sight?—If you're considering buying a system, you must determine if line of sight with the satellites exists from your potential dish location. This table gives elevations and azimuths from across the U.S. and instructions in using them.

DSSLOC.TXT (2,778 bytes)

View From the Roof—MAUG chief sysop Neil Shapiro writes about how his installation proceeded and gives his thoughts on its operation and quality.

DSSINS.TXT (6,467 bytes)

BODY SLAMMIN' BULLETIN—What happened to the Brooklyn Brawler last Saturday? The Undertaker? If you're a diehard fan of professional wrestling or know someone who is, you will both get a kick (and maybe a half nelson) out of Ring Report, a weekly update of all things wrestling composed by James "Mad Dog" Finch uploaded to the Sports Forum's (GO FANS) Library 7, "Ring Things." The Report features news and entertaining summaries based on TV coverage of events in the World Wrestling Federation and World Championship Wrestling's various divisions, as well as regular commentary and columns such as the "State of Wrestling Address." Search the library using the wild-card file name RR*.TXT for a selection of the most recent Reports: most files are in the range of 15,000–60,000 bytes in size.

PUMP UP YOUR MAC-The Macintosh OS/System Forum (GO MACSYS) is an excellent source of system extensions, control panels, and especially utilities that let you customize operation of your Mac.

Library 7, "Utilities"

Gumshoe-The ultimate Get Info utility that retrieves virtually every scrap of information the Finder and desktop database contain for any application, file, folder, or disk. Lets you replace the native icon for any file type/creator combination.

GUMSHO.SIT (241,408 bytes) M

UltraFind—A high-speed file find utility that quickly locates anything on your desktop, mounted media (e.g., external hard drives or Syquest drives), or network, and lets you open, copy, move, read, label, back up, or delete it.

ULTRAF.SEA (250,368 bytes) M

Lineup-This utility organizes the folder windows that the Finder uses, letting you line up windows according to rules you define. Features drag-and-drop operation. LINEUPSEA (79,744 bytes) M



Malph (above)—This application switcher/ launcher sits on your desktop, displaying the names and/or icons of applications that are open or need to be opened reqularly. Supports drag-and-drop with Systems 7.1.4 and above and Drag Manager installed.

MALPH.SIT (37,504 bytes) M

7Tuner—A System 7 enhancement that provides Finder command-key equivalents, 3-D folders and color icons, speedier mouse, color windows, and animated cursor and pointer. Eliminates the window-zooming rectangles and file-rename delay.

TUNR17.SIT (253,184 bytes) M



MacPassword (above)—A major update of the popular security program that protects your Mac from prying eyes and viruses. Read instructions before installing. Demo version lasting 60 days.

MACPAS.SIT (242,816 bytes) M

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BENEFITS-

The Retirement Living Forum (GO RETIRE-MENT) features two new series of uploads that explain various aspects of U.S. government benefits to seniors. Library 2, "Social Security," has more than 20 informational files provided by the Social Security Administration, covering such topics as what you should tell the SSA when retiring from

your own business, working while disabled. and reading the SSA earnings statement. The files require the Acrobat Reader program available elsewhere online (GO ACRO-BAT). To see the selection, search the library using the wild-card file name *.PDF (10,000-220,000 bytes each). Library 6, "Medicare," now has popular handbooks from the Health Care Financing Administration in text form, including "The Medicare Handbook," "Guide to Health Insurance for People With Medicare," and "Guide to Choosing a Nursing Home." Search the library using the keyword HCFA (20,000-190,000 bytes each).

WINDOWS CLEANERS-Keep your Windows PC running lean and clean with the boatloads of system utilities in the Windows Shareware Forum (GO WINSHARE).

Library 4, "Win System Utils"

Wintune-This "Test and Tune-Up Kit" from Windows Magazine garnered more than 20,000 downloads in its first two months. The program is diagnostic software for determining system performance, and offers tips for improving speed after completion.

WINTUN.ZIP (1,395,900 bytes) W

ZR FileWorks—Possibly the Swiss Army Knife of compression/viewing programs, FileWorks lets you compress files with password options using the ZIP, ARC, LZH, ARJ, and ZOO schemes; UUencode and break up the compressed file for transmission or posting over the Internet, with merging and decode of the same: view/add to/delete from/run programs within a compressed file; and view files of the major graphics formats.

ZRFW.ZIP (361,599 bytes) W

Pentium FPU Fix-Worried about the accuracy of your Pentium processor's FPU functions? This package contains a DOS TSR program that masks coprocessor functions, and a Windows utility to test for faulty operations.

PENTIU.ZIP (17,979 bytes) D W

WinLog-An invisible 12K executable file that logs all Windows activity on a machine, recording the active windows' title at all times, which catches most open applications and documents.

WINLOG.ZIP (5,690 bytes) W

RTPM—The Real-Time Performance Monitor provides a graphical display of selectable parameters such as CPU load, free virtual memory, and free system resources. A C-language rewrite of the popular WinEKG utility.

RTPM.ZIP (31,554 bytes) W



The employee owners of United have come up with an easy way for you to make flight reservations on your computer. United Connection™ services.

You set the priorities. Choose from among 550 airlines for the one with the schedule most convenient for you. Or check for a low fare, the kind of aircraft you prefer, your favorite seat location, whatever. Then reserve your flight and purchase your ticket online.

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Book Reviews

Following are summaries of book reviews available for reading this month in Online Today. To read the complete reviews, use the Go command listed at the end of each summary.

Genealogy Online: Researching Your Roots



By Elizabeth Powell Crowe Windcrest/ McGraw-Hill, 1995 280 pages, \$27.95 (softcover)

Budding genealogists and experts alike will benefit from this meticu-

lous online research guide that offers a tour of electronic genealogical resources, says reviewer Sharon Kahn. GO OLT-5510

The Net After Dark

By Lamont Wood John Wiley & Sons, 1994 356 pages, \$16.95 (softcover)

This investigation of the more dimly lit areas of the information superhighway takes you to all those secret places onlinewhether you're looking for cyber-jokes or cyber-punk, says reviewer John Edwards. GO OLT-5500

The Underground Guide to Excel 5.0 for Windows



By Lee Hudspeth and Timothy-James Lee Addison-Wesley, 1994 326 pages, \$19.95 (softcover)

Written for intermediate and advanced users, this book will help you

more efficiently utilize Excel 5.0 for Windows. Reviewer Nick Willett praises it for pointing out inconsistencies in the program, informing upgraders of paradigm shifts, and generally steering the reader around bumps in the road. GO OLT-5560

Show-Stopper! The Breakneck Race to Create Windows NT and the Next Generation at Microsoft

By G. Pascal Zachary The Free Press, 1994 312 pages, \$22.95 (hardcover)

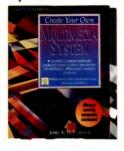
This is a close-up look at the development of Windows NT and the Microsoft team behind it. Reviewer Robert Sanchez says that although the author has captured the intensity of the work, flavor of the conflicts, and personalities of the players, it is a slow, grinding read. GO OLT-5520

Mosaic User's Guide

By Bryan Pfaffenberger MIS:Press, 1994 274 pages, \$24.95 (softcover)

Calling this a powerful tutorial and reference, reviewer William J. Lynott says this book will provide the guidance needed for many thousands of new users who are thinking about dipping a toe in the frigid Internet waters. GO OLT-5530

Create Your Own Multimedia System



By John A. McCormick Windcrest/ McGraw-Hill,1994 398 pages, \$32.95 (softcover with one diskette)

This book provides an in-depth look at the various

components that go into a multimedia computer and offers advice on how to shop for the best buys. Reviewer John Edwards says its recommendations and field-tested hints are designed to help readers sidestep timeconsuming and costly mistakes. GO OLT-5540

Screamer: The Ultimate PC Supercharging Kit

By Marty Jerome and Wendy Taylor Random House Electronic Publishing, 1994 260 pages, \$35 (softcover with one diskette)

Increase your productivity by transforming your old computer into a screamer. This book tells the basics of how to do that, from adding memory to caching. While it's packed with information, reviewer Harry Green found its redundancies, small inaccuracies, and exaggerations annoying. GO OLT-5550



Now it's easy to communicate with people on all major messaging services, including the Internet, using the CompuServe* account you already have.

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munications interface. Because you have more important things to do



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MAY 1995



Win a \$1,000 Grand Prize Package from Home Shopping Values

Remember Mom on May 14th with a Gift from The Mall



Dear Electronic Mall Shopper:

Join us for The Mall's Electronic Shopping Extravaganza beginning May 1st. Play the shopping trivia contest and you have a chance to win the Grand Prize Package — a total of four prizes worth over \$1,000, compliments of Home Shopping Values (GO HSV)! Plus you could win valuable prizes from The Mac Zone/PC Zone (GO MZ) and AutoVantage Online (GO AV). See page 9 for details.

And, of course, don't forget Mom on May 14th! This month we've filled the Mall Shoppers Guide with a great lineup of ideas to help you select the perfect gift. You'll find a wide variety of suggestions for Mother's Day — plus ideas for Father's Day and graduations.

Welcome this month to our newest Mall stores — Vektron Online (GO VEKTRON) and OfficeMax OnLine (GO OFCMAX). Remember, you can shop these new stores — and any Mall store — connect-free, 24 hours a day!

See you online,

Keith Arable

Keith Arnold
Electronic Mall Manager







Indulge her with this gourmet Mother's Day basket.

This attractive wicker basket is filled with goodies Mom will love: a delicious 5-oz. Effie Marie rum butter cake, gournet honey and apricot spread, 3.5 oz. of Mango Treasure tea, a world-famous La Tempesta biscotti dipping cookie, a bright red heart-adorned "Mom" mug and two 2-oz. packages of gournet coffee.

COFFEE ANYONE ??? GO COF MOTHER'S DAY BASKET ONLY \$39.95

Brighten Mom's wardrobe with a Dress by Darian.

Dresses by Darian are a favorite of women everywhere. Perfect for work, play or spring outings. Choose blue rose floral or almond mixed bouquet prints in comfortable polyester. The blue dress has a contrast yoke, lace edging and soft front pleats. The almond dress has button front with lace collar, tuck bodice and elastic waist.

Machine wash. Sizes 8 – 18.

HOME SHOPPING VALUES. GO HSV DARIAN DRESSES \$39.95 EA.

Give her roses that will last forever.

These beautiful authentic Capodimonte porcelain roses are hand-crafted by Italian craftsmen, using centuries-old techniques to precisely capture the delicacy of the real thing. Mom will treasure this cluster of lovely red roses for years to come.

BRETON HARBOR GIFT SERVICES. GO BH CAPODIMONTE PORCELAIN ROSES \$69.99



Surprise her with beautiful fresh flowers from Flower Stop!

Treat vour mom to the finest in fresh flowers — grown in our own greenhouses and flown in overnight! We'll design a beautiful assortment of Roses, Carnations,

Alstromeria Lilies and a delightful accent flower. Overnight delivery included.

FLOWER STOP. GO FS MOTHER'S DAY BOUQUET \$39.99



Express your love with the Tea Rose Bouquet.

A rose by any other name could never smell this exquisite. This lovely glass vase holds a glorious bouquet with five stems each of soft pink and deep pink spray roses with clusters of buds. Perfect for anyone who loves the romantic scent of roses. Add captivating Tea Rose Eau de Toilette (\$65 value) at a great savings.

800-FLOWERS & 800-GIFTHOUSE. GO FGH BOUQUET & VASE #2711 \$34.99 BOUQUET & VASE W/TEA ROSE EAU DE TOILETTE #2710 \$49.99



Send Mom a gift "with spirit" this Mother's Day!

The "Chocolate Delight" gift basket combines fine chocolates and select confections with a 750ml bottle of Godiva Chocolate Liqueur to satisfy even the most discriminating chocolate lover's sweet

LIQUOR BY WIRE. GO LBW "CHOCOLATE DELIGHT" GIFT BASKET

tooth! Gift-wrapped with a card and your personal message.

LIST PRICE \$136

SALE PRICE \$124.99

m Ashley



Delight Mom with a treasure box of chocolates.

This beautiful peach taffeta jewelry box is filled with the Deluxe Assortment of chocolates and the rich creamy milk chocolates of the Heart to Heart ssortment. Even after she's finished the chocolates, this gorgeous jewelry box will bring a smile to her face every day. 65 pieces, 30.2 oz. Box is $9\frac{1}{2}$ " x $9\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3". #69601.

ETHEL M CHOCOLATES. GO ETHELM CHOCOLATE TREASURE BOX \$65



Make her day unforgettable with delicious Italian Ice Cream Truffles!

Mom will never forget this special gift! Twelve gourmet ice cream truffles handmade from ancient Italian recipes. They're huge — ¼ lb. each — almost the size of a baseball! In mouth-watering flavors such as: Banana with Peanuts, Praline Pecan, Raspberry and Chocolate, Caramel Fudge Almond, and Apricot with White Chocolate Chips.

THE GIFT SENDER. GO GS
ITALIAN ICE CREAM TRUFFLES \$39.95





Tell her she's precious with brilliant diamond jewelry!

Nothing is more stunning than glittering diamonds. These lovely Diamond Tennis Earrings contain one carat (total weight) of diamonds, set in "S" links of the finest 14K gold. Or, choose the beautiful Diamond Heart Pendant with one-quarter carat (total weight) of sparkling diamonds set in 14K gold. For the highest quality jewelry at the best values, visit America's Leading JewelerTM online.

SERVICE MERCHANDISE. GO SVCMER



Wrap her in the luxury of 100% Turkish cotton. Legendary for their extraordinary thickness and absorbency, our Turkish cotton robes and towels absorb water quickly, helping to conserve body heat. Machine washable. Robe in S, M, L or XL. The beautiful "Nutcracker" Music Box will delight her with *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*.

HAMMACHER SCHLEMMER. GO HS TURKISH COTTON BATHROBE \$99.95 BATH TOWEL (30" X 60") \$29.95 "NUTCRACKER" MUSIC BOX \$39.95







Save \$10 on this handsome executive gift set from Austad's!

This personalized pen and calculator set is made to grace the desk of someone special. The handsome rosewood gift box contains a personalized rosewood pen with golf club clip, plus a handy calculator. A lovely gift to be cherished for years to come. Specify personalization for the box and pen. 18 characters available.

AUSTAD'S. GO AU
PERSONALIZED PEN/CALCULATOR SET
LIST PRICE \$34.95

SALE PRICE \$24.95





Brighten Mom's day with this colorful Tulip Cachepot.

With a tulip design based on a watercolor by Jacob Marrel (Dutch, 1614 – 1681), this charming planter will bring a touch of spring to any room. Perfect for potted plants or bulbs. Ht. 6¼"; Dia. 7½". (Flowers not included.)

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. GO MMA TULIP CACHEPOT \$45

She'll love the Nautical Knits Collection from Brooks Brothers!

Our exclusive Nautical Collection imported from Italy in fine gauge cotton. Choose our multi-colored tunic with matching pants. Complete the look with Cap Toe flats in navy. Details online.

BROOKS BROTHERS. GO BR TUNIC KNIT TOP \$98 NAVY KNIT PANTS \$98 NAVY CAP TOE FLATS \$98

All prices in *The Electronic Mall* Shoppers Guide are the most accurate available at press time. Occasionally a printed price will be out of date. Shipping and handling are additional unless otherwise noted.



Sail away in luxury with Compu-Cruise by Rosenbluth Vacations.

Pamper yourself as never before with a luxury cruise by Compu-Cruise. Featuring lines such as Seabourn, Crystal, Renaissance and Windstar. Five-star service, unique ports of call and the best cruise prices — guaranteed! Details online.

COMPU-CRUISE BY ROSENBLUTH VACATIONS, GO CRUISE



Travel in style with quality-crafted, lightweight luggage from JCPenney.

Packed with value, this four-piece Jaguar FreeportTM tweed luggage set is woven of durable 100% jute and lined with moisture-resistant PVC. Includes Pullman with wheels, Carry-On, Garment Bag and Tote. All pieces store conveniently in the Pullman. Available in navy and brown.

JCPENNEY. GO JCP JAGUAR FREEPORT LUGGAGE SET (4-PC.) \$79.99



Take your pants off — and pull on Levi's denim shorts from Americana Clothing!

The best in casual sportswear just got better! Kick back and relax in Levi's denim shorts for men and women — in all your favorite Levi's styles. 505 Regular Fit and 550 Relaxed Fit Traditionals for men, 512 Slim Fit and 550 Relaxed Fit for women. Complete details on sizes and colors online.

AMERICANA CLOTHING. GO AC LEVI'S MEN'S SHORTS \$34 LEVI'S WOMEN'S SHORTS \$39



Get optimum performance with Reebok athletic sunglasses!

See how Reebok's performance improves yours. The Eliminator is lightweight and perfect for long-term comfort. The Relay includes two interchangeable shields for changing light conditions.

SUNGLASSES, SHAVERS & MORE. GO SUN ELIMINATOR SUNGLASSES (TOP) \$76.95 RELAY SUNGLASSES (BOTTOM) \$102.75

Discover the world's juiciest orange — Florida's Valencia.

A full year of warm tropical rains and sparkling Florida sunshine gives every Valencia its distinctive, delicious flavor. Our Valencias are harvested by hand, triple-graded, then hand-packed and delivered **free** of charge.

FLORIDA FRUIT SHIPPERS. GO FFS VALENCIA ORANGES ½ BU. (22 LBS.) \$27.95



ELECTRONIC SHOPPING EXTRAVAGANZA

Win a \$1,000 Grand Prize Package from Home Shopping Values!

Get set to shop... get set for fun... get set to play The Mall's Electronic Shopping Extravaganza Contest! Each week from May 1st until June 30th, 1995, go online and answer five fun multiple-choice questions. Each correct answer enters you in a random drawing for the

Grand Prize Package — prizes totaling over \$1,000,

compliments of Home Shopping Values

(GO HSV)!



Yorx Portable TV/Cassette/AM/FM Radio. 4½" B/W TV, cassette player, AM/FM radio. Retail value \$179.95.

Sound Design Music Center with Wireless Remote Control. Dual cassette decks, dynamic speakers, equalizer, more. Retail value \$399.95

Wireless Rechargeable Infrared Headphones. Transmitter plugs into TV or stereo. 50-ft range. Retail value \$199.

Magnavox Five-Disc CD Changer. 50-track memory programming, infrared remote. Retail value \$299.95.

All of these could be yours, compliments

of Home Shopping Values, if you're the Electronic Shopping Extravaganza Grand Prize winner! So get set to win!

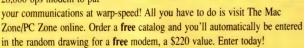




The Electronic Shopping Extravaganza includes these contests from The Mac Zone/PC Zone (GO MZ) and AutoVantage Online (GO AV). Enter soon for your chance to win!

Win a 28.8 Kbps Modem from The Mac Zone/PC Zone!

You could win a blazing fast 28,800 bps modem to put



THE MAC ZONE/PC ZONE. GO MZ



Exiter Engine of Annual MATERITY STATE MATERITY STATE MATERITY STATE MATERIAL STA

Win a Free Membership to AutoVantage Online!

A membership to AutoVantage Online can save you hun-

dreds, even thousands, of dollars on your car purchases and repairs. Find comprehensive new and used car information and savings right online. Add your name to the mailing list online to be eligible for a monthly drawing for a **free** one-year AutoVantage membership, a \$49 value!

AUTOVANTAGE ONLINE, GO AV

MALL EFERENCE

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125 stores at your fingertips.

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on these two pages for a complete

listing by category of Mall stores

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GO MALL to shop online or to find

worldwide shipping information,

payment options, a detailed product

index, a directory of print catalogs,

and the latest Mall news, events and

contests. GO MALL

No matter which pricing plan you have on CompuServe. shopping The Electronic Mall is connect-free, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

APPAREL/DEPT. STORES

AC	Americana	Clothing
AC	AHIEHCUHU	Clottillig

AU Austad's •

BR **Brooks** Brothers

HS Hammacher Schlemmer

LEGGS Hanes L'eggs Bali Playtex JMS •

HSV Home Shopping Values •

JCP JCPenney =

LANDS Lands' End

PFS Paul Fredrick MenStyle

SR Sears Shop At Home •

▼ SVCMER Service Merchandise ■

Shoppers Advantage Online

SHOES Stuart McGuire Shoes

ARTS/MUSIC/VIDEO

			11.00	
(D	DAAC	Mucie	Service	4

BOT Books on Tape *

HIFI Cambridge SoundWorks

FREECD Columbia House * CCV Critics' Choice Video *

ESTORE Entertainment Drive Ltd.

Entertainment Works

JR Justice Records

LE The Laser's Edge

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art

THEPLA The Music Place

NP Narada Productions

PM People Store

SGM Sega Mall

Time Warner Viewer's Edge

AUTOMOBILES

Alamo Freeways

Al **Automobile Information Center**

AQ AutoQuot-R

AV AutoVantage Online *

CMC Cadillac Motor Car

ESCORT The Escort Store

Ford Credit FC

FORD Ford Electronic Showroom

FMC

Ford Motor Company

GY Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.

Lincoln-Mercury Electronic Showroom

NISSAN Nissan Interactive

LM

PON Pontiac Showroom *

BOOKS/PERIODICALS

AB Audio Book Club

BOT Books On Tape •

CBK CompuBooks

DB Data Based Advisor

DFP Detroit Free Press

ENT Entrepreneur Group •

PWM Exec/Direct

▼ FM The FORTUNE Store

IW IndustryWeek Magazine

IUM Information USA

ΙB Investor's Business Daily

LOS Library of Science Book Club

ZD MacUser

MH McGraw-Hill On-Line Bookstore

MSP Microsoft Press

Newbridge Book Clubs

NB

NN NewsNet ■

PCC PC/Computing ZD PC Magazine

PCB **PC Publications**

PM The People Magazine Store

PRC PRC Database Publishing

RANDOM Random House Electronic Publishing

BK Small Computer Book Club .

▼ SIA Sports Illustrated Insider Authentics

TWEPB Time Warner Elect. Pub. Bookstore

IISM U.S.News & World Report

WGL

WG&L/Auerbach

JW Wiley Pro-Shop

WS Windows Sources

ZD Ziff-Davis Publishing Online

CLUBS/MEMBERSHIPS

AV AutoVantage Online

CD BMG Music Service *

FREECD Columbia House *

LOS Library of Science Book Club .

NB Newbridge Book Clubs

DINE Premier Dining *

SA

Shoppers Advantage Online BK Small Computer Book Club *

TA Travelers Advantage

COMPUTER HARDWARE SUPPLIES

AT&T Online Store =

A2Z Multimedia SuperShop

CF Computer Express

CA Concord Direct

DA Dalco Computer Electronics

DD Digital PC Store

HTH Heathkit Educational Systems

BUYIBM IBM PC Direct

JDR JDR Microdevices

ΜZ Mac Zone/PC Zone

MW MacWarehouse

MCW MicroWarehouse

MCS Mission Control Software

PA Parsons Technology

PCA PC Catalog •

SR Sears Shop At Home •

▼ VEK Vektron Online

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

A2Z Multimedia SuperShop

ABSOLU Absolut Museum BB Broderbund

CF CheckFree Corporation •

ORDER CompuServe Store *

CE Computer Express

DD Digital PC Store

EP Epic MegaGames

PWM Exec/Direct

HTS Hybrid Technical Systems

IBMPSP IBM Personal Software Products

JDR JDR Microdevices ITM

The Lotus Organizer Store •

ΜZ Mac Zone/PC Zone MW MacWarehouse

MCW MicroWarehouse

MCS Mission Control Software

PA Parsons Technology

PCA PC Catalog . SAF Safeware Computer Insurance

SD Shareware Depot

SI Sierra On-Line

SP Softdisk Publishing **▼** VEK Vektron Online

WordPerfect Store

FINANCE/INSURANCE/ Real estate

BNBG	Rull	ጸ	Bear •
טטווט	DUII	O.	Doui

INC Business Incorporating Guide

CTB Centerbank Mortgage

CF CheckFree Corporation

CMS CMS Home Mortagge Corp •

CNL CNL Customer Direct

CORP The Company Corporation

CARD CompuServe Visa Store

CIC Continental Insurancenter

CRE CREDENTIALS SERVICES

FC Ford Credit

HRB H&R Block

HF HomeFinder by AMS

IB Investor's Business Daily

TKR Max Ule Discount Brokerage *

RELO Relocation Network *

SAF Safeware Computer Insurance

TC Twentieth Century Mutual Funds

MORLOWIDE



GIFTS/FLOWERS/ Gourmet foods

FGH 800-Flowers & 800-Gifthouse

AIF Adventures in Food ★

BH Breton Harbor Gift Services

COF Coffee Anyone ???

ETHELM Ethel M Chocolates

FFS Florida Fruit Shippers *

FS Flower Stop •

FTD FTD ONLINE

GS The Gift Sender

GIM Gimmee Jimmy's Cookies

GMR Green Mountain Coffee Roasters

OMK Oreen Moontain Coree Roasi

HAL Hallmark Connections •

HAM HoneyBaked Ham Company •

Liquor by Wire

MMA The Metropolitan Museum of Art

OS Omaha Steaks

WK Walter Knoll Florist

HOBBIES/TOYS/PETS

CAMP CAMPMOR •

GW Garrett Wade Woodworking

IAMS The IAMS Company

▼ SGM Sega Mall

TOM Tomorrow's Child

HOUSEWARES

BSET Bassett Furniture

CC Chef's Catalog

BEDS Dial-A-Mattress •

HSV Home Shopping Values •

JCP JCPenney ■

SA Shoppers Advantage Online

HM Sutherland's HouseMart

MERCHANDISE/ Electronics

HIFI Cambridge SoundWorks

CA Concord Direct *

CFD Crutchfield Electronics •

ESCORT The Escort Store •

GTE GTE Phone Mart

HS Hammacher Schlemmer

HTH Heathkit Educational Systems

HSV Home Shopping Values •

HTS Hybrid Technical Systems •

JCP JCPenney ■

MCP Millennium Cellular Products

SA Shoppers Advantage Online •

SVCMER Service Merchandise

SUN Sunglasses, Shavers & More

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INC Business Incorporating Guide

CORP The Company Corporation

ORDER CompuServe Store *

CARD CompuServe Visa Store

HRB H&R Block •

TTS H&R Block Tax Training School

HF HomeFinder by AMS

IUM Information USA

▼ OFCMAX Office Max Online *

PWP Penny Wise Custom Print Shop •

PW Penny Wise Office Products •

RELO Relocation Network •

SUCCES SUCCESS tools

UP University of Phoenix •

UPS UPS Worldwide Services



PUBLIC SERVICES/ CHARITIES

CCF Christian Children's Fund

UW United Way Online

SPORTS/FITNESS/HEALTH

AC Americana Clothing

AU Austad's •

CAMP CAMPMOR ■

CL Contact Lens Supply

RX Health and Vitamin Express

LENS Lens Express

SDV SDV Vitamins *

SHOES Stuart McGuire Shoes

TRAVEL/VACATIONS

AF Air France ■

ASU Airline Services Unlimited

AMZ Amazing Vacation Deals

CRUISE Compu-Cruise by Rosenbluth

▼ HYATT Hyatt International

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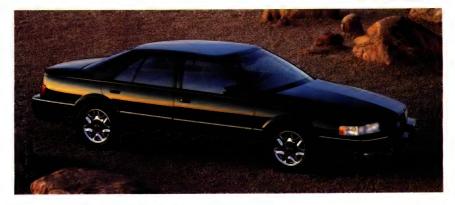
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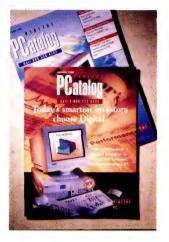
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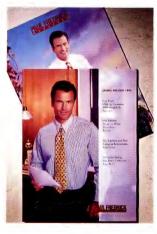
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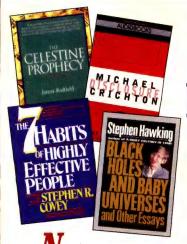
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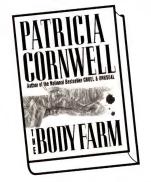
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Readers' Writes

How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe

with Charles Bowen



Charles Bowen is a contributing editor of CompuServe Magazine, author of CompuServe From A to Z, and co-author of How to Get the Most Out of CompuServe, both from Random House.

There are hundreds of thousands of immigrants coming into the United States every year. Can you tell me where on CompuServe I can find information about U.S. citizenship?

Wei-Yeh Chu New York, New York

Start your research with Grolier's Academic American Encyclopedia (GO GROLIERS). If you search with the keyword CITIZENSHIP, the encyclopedia provides a lengthy article with a menu for sections devoted to an overview, historical development, requirements for citizenship, naturalization, and expatriation, along with a bibliography and a table on conditions for acquiring U.S. citizenship at birth.

Can you recommend where to find information about home satellite dishes?

Diana Godden Nanaimo, Canada

Your best bet is the Consumer Electronics Video Forum (GO CEVIDEO). You also might want to visit the Consumer Reports area (GO CSR).

I'm sometimes confused about the symbols used in the Executive News Service. For example, a Reuters news clip can come up as RTf, RTw, RTec, etc. Can you translate the symbols?

> Charles A. Warner Odessa, Ukraine

Resources are regularly being added to the Executive News Service (GO ENS). As of this writing, stories come from 26 different wires, each associated with a unique symbol. They are AP US & World (APn), AP France (FAP), AP Sports (APs), AP Financial (APf), Australian Associated Press (AAP), Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa), Dow Jones (DJ), PA News (PA), PR Newswire (PR), Reuters World Report (RTw), Reuters North America (RTna), Reuters Euro Community Report (RTec), Reuters Sports Report (RTs), Reuters Financial Report (RTf), Reuters/Variety Entertainment (RTve), UPI US & World (UPn), UPI Southeastern US (UPse), UPI Northeastern US (UPne), UPI Central US (UPce), UPI Southwestern US (UPsw), UPI Mid-Atlantic US (UPma), UPI Western US (UPwe), UPI Sports (UPs), UPI Financial (UPf), US Company NewsAlert (OTC), and The Washington Post (WP).

I'd like to know where to find information on manufacturer recalls and problem reports for automobiles.

Daniel Peacock Burlington, New Jersey

Several forums have the information. Using the keyword RECALL, search libraries in the Consumer (GO CONFORUM), Detroit Free Press (GO DETFORUM), Automobile (GO CARS), and Worldwide Car Network (GO WCN) forums.

Send questions to Compuserve User ID number 70007,411. If your question is answered in this column, we'll apply a \$25 connect credit to your CompuServe account.

May Mensa Puzzler

This month's Mensa Puzzler was submitted by CompuServe member Susanne Senger. You'll find the answer in the Mensa Forum's News Flash (GO MENSA). Answers to past Puzzlers are located in the forum's Library 13, "Puns/Jokes/Puzzles."



Three men had an opulent meal. All three had fallen asleep by the time the waiter brought the dessert, which consisted of a bowl of dates. When the first man woke up, he ate his share and fell asleep again. Later, the second man woke up and ate what he thought was his share, then went back to sleep. When the third man woke up, he ate what he thought was his share of dates. Finally, all three woke up together and saw that there were eight dates left. How many dates did each man eat, and how many more dates did each man get to make for an equal distribution?

Do you have a Puzzler that you'd like to share with CM readers? Send your entry of no more than five brief puzzles (with answers) to: Puzzlers, CompuServe Magazine, P.O. Box 20212, Columbus, OH 43220. Include your full name, address, daytime telephone number, and CompuServe User ID number. Puzzles that are not sensitive to character positioning may be sent by CompuServe Mail to User ID number 76004,3302. If your puzzle is used here, we'll credit \$35 to your CompuServe account.

Graphic of the Month







If you have a favorite image on CompuServe, consider nominating it as a Graphic of the Month. To do so, simply GO GRFMONTH and fill out the online survey. If the image you nominate is selected as the Graphic of the Month, you and the image uploader/creator will receive a \$25 CompuServe account credit. Image uploaders/creators are permitted to nominate themselves, but only one \$25 credit is applied to each member.

CM's Graphic of the Month for May is Imagine-Rendered Honeybee Through Field, created by Alan Henry for the book 3D Modeling Lab. Henry composed the image on his Amiga 3000T-040 using Imagine 3.0. The honeybee was created by grouping several simple primitive shapes, manipulated to simulate the respective bee part. An image map of bee hair was applied to the bee's head and body using Imagine's filter map setting. Finally, different textures were applied to the bee's body to make it appear as if it had pollen specks and patches on it. The image resolution is 640 x 400. It is available in the Amiga Arts Forum's (GO AMIGAARTS) Library 11, "24 Bit IFF Art," as file HONEYB.JPG (177,497 bytes).

Henry is an F-16 pilot for the New Jersey Air National Guard. Having worked with 3-D graphics since 1987, he has created 3-D objects for software companies and written for 3-D books including 3D Modeling Lab and the Imagine 3.0 user manual.

This month's runners-up are *Green Scarf*, by fashion photographer Gerard McKee, found in the Glamour Graphics Forum's (GO GLAMOUR) Library 16, "Gerard McKee Online," as file GM0020.GIF (160,165 bytes), and *Clematis Ramona, Two Flowers*, by Lloyd Fortney, found in the Gardening Forum's (GO GARDENING) Library 5, "Flowers/Bulbs," as file CLEMAT.JPG (44,315 bytes).

MEMBER ESSAY

AP Online Lets Him Phone It In for Sports-Stats Trivia

Who could have imagined that CompuServe's basic services could pay such great dividends? On a Friday evening, I came in late from work, turned on my radio, and logged onto CompuServe. The radio was broadcasting the post-game show for the Dallas Mavericks NBA basketball game that had just been played. Since I missed the game, I decided to log onto Associated Press Online (GO APONLINE) to get the summary and stats for the game. Now, I know the Mavericks are not the best team in the NBA, but this year they are one of the most improved and certainly one of the most fun to watch, so as a loyal fan I like to keep up with what's going on. As I was reading the game summary on CompuServe, the host of the radio broadcast asked a question about scoring statistics for this evening's game; the first person who called in with the correct answer would get a very nice prize. What do you know? Right in front of me on AP Online was the answer to his question. I phoned in immediately and won the prize, which included: two floor-section tickets to a Mayericks game, dinner for two at a steak house that has

been voted one of the five best in the United States, a limousine ride to and from dinner and the game, and a Mavericks locker-room tour.

Last Saturday I took advantage of the prize, and it was a wonderful evening. The steaks were the most tender I have ever had, the limousine was bigger than the first apartment I lived in, and the Mavericks even beat the Midwest division-leading Utah Jazz in a great game! It was an evening made possible because I was at the right place on CompuServe at the right time. You just never know when you'll be able to take advantage of the Service. Thanks.

Stan Collins Cedar Hill, Texas

Compete for \$50 worth of connect-time credit in *CompuServe Magazine's* monthly Member Essay contest. Write a 200-word essay describing an original way you've used the Information Service and send it to CompuServe User ID number 76004,3302. Include your full name and address.

UPDATE



CNN News Niche

CNN brings you the latest news in words and pictures via CNN Online, which now has an enhanced menu. Take a look at Images of the Week (such as Queen Elizabeth II visiting Ireland, above) under CNN Images. Also, test your current-events knowledge with a CNN News Quiz and get news updated Monday through Friday from CNN's top correspondents and producers with CNN News Capsules. Other menu options let you read CNN columns on the Motor City, Washington, D.C., entertainment, and the environment, and access a sports calendar for pro and college sports. GO CNN

Join William Gibson, science-fiction author credited with coining the term "cyberspace," in a ZiffNet conference on May 18. The conference is part of Johnny Mnemonic Week on ZiffNet May 14–20, introducing the new Sony Imagesoft interactive game based on Gibson's screenplay *Johnny Mnemonic*. For complete details on the conference and other events, including a Free Peek on ZiffNet, GO JOHNNYM.

Members in the U.S. and Canada can now subscribe to *CompuServeCD* for only \$5.95 per disc plus shipping and handling. *CompuServeCD*, an Invisions Gold Award—winning title, is a bimonthly multimedia companion to the CompuServe Information Service and is available in Mac and Windows versions. To subscribe, GO CCD. To order the CD in other countries, GO ORDER.

The new Financial Services Information Center provides information about financial services and their providers. Perform searches for mutual funds, place orders for fund investment kits, prospectuses, and brochures, and order newsletters that cover financial topics. GO INFOCTR

Access Microsoft News for historical and breaking news about Microsoft, including press releases, background information, financial data, executive biographies, and product information. GO MSNEWS

Get the story behind the story in People Online's Reporter's Notebook, where *People Weekly* reporters give an inside look at the stars and situations they cover. In recent stories, members got a behind-the-scenes look at the O. J. Simpson trial from Pulitzer Prize—winning journalist Lucinda Franks and were privy to a sit-down talk with comedian Jerry Lewis. GO PEOPLE



Onscreen Ants

Mac users can download the newly hatched Interactive Ant Farm from Capitol Records in the Recording Industry Forum. The game corresponds with the release of Adam Ant's new album, Wonderful. Impersonate the Orkin man, test your feelers, and load larvae in the game's various ant adventures. Check the forum's News Flash for file name and location. GO RECORD

Search the All-Movie Guide for detailed information about 50,000 films. Entries contain movie title, year of release, plot description, a list of credits and cast, and more. Also, access the All-Music Guide for reviews of more than 23,000 musical works. GO ALLMOVIE and GO ALLMUSIC

Science files based on the Emmy Award-winning PBS TV show Newton's Apple are available in the Science and Math Forum. The files, which cover topics from the physics of windsurfing to virtual-reality machines, are packed with scientific information and suggested experiments for home or classroom use. They are located in the forum's Library 8, "Newton's Apple." GO SCIENCE

NEXT MONTH • Nothing but Net: Our Big Internet Blowout Tours CompuServe's Access to the Self-Governed Global Network • The Wide World of Web: An Introduction to the World Wide Web, the Internet's Interactive, Multimedia Fun House • It's in the Cards: Cyberspace's Effect on Business Cards • The Doom Boom: How Online Fans of the Action Game Made It Their Own

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